

# Soldiers, Cities, & Civilians in Roman Syria



Nigel Pollard

MICHIGAN

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*Nigel Pollard*

*Ann Arbor*

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*For my parents, Norman and Dorothy Pollard*



## Preface

This book began life as a doctoral dissertation begun in 1989 in the Interdepartmental Program in Classical Archaeology at the University of Michigan. At the time, the Roman army in Syria had not been the subject of much recent scholarship (especially in English). The considerable amount that has been published on the subject in the last decade shows its importance and the interest it can stimulate. Much of this recent resurgence in scholarship has been due to Benjamin Isaac. His important study *The Limits of Empire: The Roman Army in the East* (1990; 2d ed., rev., 1992) appeared shortly after I began the dissertation, and it has stimulated a great deal of new scholarly debate on the subject.

I thank David Potter, chair of my dissertation committee. He has been tremendously kind and helpful on every level—academic, professional, and moral—throughout my career, and he never hesitated to give his time when it was needed. I also thank the other members of my committee, Bruce Frier, Sharon Herbert, and John Humphrey. David Mattingly and Sally Humphreys read and commented on early portions of the dissertation and have been generally helpful and encouraging. Portions of the dissertation or book manuscript were read at one time or another by Richard Duncan-Jones, Keith Hopkins, Terence Volk, and Joanne Berry, and I thank them for their suggestions and comments, while I emphasize that the errors are my own. I also thank the anonymous readers of the University of Michigan Press for their valuable comments and constructive criticism. Elizabeth Fentress played an important part in shaping my interests in Roman archaeology and economic history, and her early work on Numidia introduced me to many of the issues examined in this book. I am also grateful to Andrew Wallace-Hadrill and the British School at Rome for awarding me a Research Fellowship in 1996–97, when the original text was updated and rewritten. I also thank Margareta Steinby, for allowing me time to work on the manuscript since I came to Oxford,

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Finally, and most of all, my thanks to my parents, Dorothy and Norman Pollard, for all their support over the years.

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## Abbreviations

AE	<i>Année Épigraphique</i>
AFO	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BjB	<i>Bonner Jahrbücher</i>
CIG	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum</i>
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
CIS	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum</i>
CJ	Codex of Justinian
CRAI	<i>Comptes-rendues de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres</i>
C.Th.	Theodosian Code
FHG	<i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</i>
FIRA <sup>2</sup>	<i>Fontes Iuris Romani Anteiustiniani</i> . 2d ed.
HA	<i>Historia Augusta</i>
HSCP	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
IGLS	<i>Inscriptions Grecques et Latines de la Syrie</i>
IGRR	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes</i>
ILS	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i>
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
LRE	A.H.M. Jones. <i>The Later Roman Empire, 284–602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey</i> . 3 vol. Oxford, 1964.
MUSJ	<i>Mélanges de l'Université St. Joseph</i>
N.Th.	<i>Novellae of Theodosius</i>
OGIS	<i>Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae</i>
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
P.Euphr.	D. Feissel and J. Gascou, "Documents d'archives romaines inédits du moyen Euphrate," <i>Journal des Savants</i> 1995: 65–119.
PIR <sup>2</sup>	<i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani</i> . 2d ed.
PWRE	A. Pauly and G. Wissowa, <i>Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
P. Yadin	N. Lewis, <i>The Documents from the Bar Kochba Period in the Cave of Letters</i> . Jerusalem, 1989.
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>



## Introduction

This volume is a historical and archaeological examination of the relationship between the Roman army, cities, and civilians in the Roman provinces of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Osrhoene.<sup>1</sup> This region was selected because evidence from the area is unique in its quantity and nature. Compared to western frontier provinces, there are more documents (on stone and papyrus) produced by civilians and soldiers, official and unofficial. In contrast to other document-rich provinces, such as Egypt and Asia, Syria and Mesopotamia included major imperial frontiers and large concentrations of soldiers. To complement the documents, there is archaeological material ranging from old and poorly recorded urban excavations to contemporary rural survey work. This archaeological evidence cannot compete with that from Britain or the Rhine frontier in the scale of its coverage and often in the quality of fieldwork. However, the combination of archaeology and documents from Syria and Mesopotamia makes the region uniquely suited to a study such as this, focusing on the local level, the detail of day-to-day interaction. Furthermore, this evidence continues into the sixth century A.D., making it possible to follow three key themes through a period of some six centuries.

This book attempts to structure this diverse evidence within the fairly loose framework provided by three major, interrelated themes, all fundamental to the study of the Roman empire as a whole: the involvement of the eastern Roman army in towns, in cities, and in urbanization in general in the region; the cultural, social, and economic relationship between soldiers and civilians in the Near East, viewed, as far as possible, from the perspectives of the participants themselves, provincial and military; and the importance of institutional identity in the Roman Near East and in

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1. Armenia, Judaea/Syria Palaestina, Arabia, and Egypt have been excluded from systematic consideration because their inclusion would require a much longer study, particularly since all but Armenia have been the subject of extensive specialist literature. However, these provinces are drawn on from time to time for comparative purposes.

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the Roman world as a whole. These issues are examined over a broad sweep of time, from Augustus to the fifth century A.D., and relate to the physical fabric of the Roman empire, to issues of change and continuity, of center and periphery, of homogeneity and diversity. In less abstract terms, they force one to investigate in detail the questions of who maintained the empire, how they did so, and how they affected the culture, society, and economy that surrounded them.

The relationship of armies and cities forms an interesting theme in the Roman east. Their peculiar interrelationship in the early and middle empire is suggested by such passages as the following, in which Tacitus negatively discusses Corbulo's troops in A.D. 55.<sup>2</sup>

*Sed Corbuloni plus molis adversus ignaviam militum quam contra perfidiam hostium erat: quippe Suria transmota legiones, pace longa segnes, munia castrorum Romanorum aegerrime tolerabant. Satis constitit fuisse in eo exercitu veteranos, qui non stationem, non vigiliis inissent, vallum fossamque quasi nova et mira viserent, sine galeis, sine loriceis, nitidi et quaestuosi, militia per oppida expleta.* (Ann. 13.35)

[But it was more difficult for Corbulo to counter the laziness of his troops than to counter the trickery of his enemies. For the legions that had been transferred from Syria, slothful after a long period of peace, only with reluctance undertook the duties of a Roman camp. It was generally agreed that there were in that army veterans who never had served at a guard post or on watch duty, who viewed the rampart and ditch as novel and unusual things, well-groomed and wealthy men, their military service spent in towns.]

A passage in the same author's *Histories* describes the reaction of an audience in the theater at Antioch, when informed by Mucianus, a partisan of Vespasian, that Vitellius planned to transfer the Syrian legions to the Rhine frontier and vice versa in A.D. 69.

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2. E.L. Wheeler ("The Laxity of Syrian Legions," in *The Roman Army in the East*, ed. D. Kennedy [1996], 229–76) argues at great length, and correctly, that these negative views of the Syrian legions are a literary topos. Their interest in this context stems not from their judgments regarding the quality of the eastern Roman armies but from their relevance to the relationship between the Roman army, cities, and their populations.

*Nihil aeque provinciam exercitumque accendit quam quod adseverabat Mucianus statuisse Vitellium ut Germanicas legiones in Syriam ad militiam opulentam quietamque transferret, contra Syriacis legionibus Germanica hiberna caelo ac laboribus dura mutarentur; quippe et provinciales sueto militum contubernio gaudebant, plerique necessitudinibus et propinquitatibus mixti, et militibus vetustate stipendiorum nota et familiaria castra in modum penatium diligebantur. (2.80.3)*

[Nothing roused the provincials and the army so much as Mucianus' assertion that Vitellius would transfer the German legions to Syria to luxurious and leisurely military service and that, on the other hand, winter quarters in Germany made unpleasant by climate and hard work were to be turned over to the Syrian legions; the provincials took particular pleasure in the accustomed companionship of the soldiers, and many were connected to them as family members and friends; and because of the length of their service, the soldiers loved their well-known and familiar camps like homes.]

The wider context of this passage indicates that Mucianus had made a direct address to the people of Antioch in the theater of that city, and hence it seems likely that the *provinciales* were the citizens of Antioch. It seemed reasonable to Tacitus to depict those inhabitants of Antioch as viewing the soldiers based nearby not as an imperial force of oppression but as individuals with whom they enjoyed close personal ties, as friends and relations. Conversely the soldiers liked their *nota et familiaria castra*. Of course, any camp might become *nota et familiaria* to soldiers stationed there for a long time, regardless of such circumstances as location or relations with the local civilian population. However, in the context of the previous clause, it is likely that Tacitus intended his reader to see a connection between the soldiers' liking for their camp and their special association with the *provinciales* there. Indeed, the term *familiaris* applied to the camp is ambiguous, having a literal connection with *familia* and hence the provincial *necessitudines* alluded to in the previous clause, as well as a looser meaning like the English word *familiar*. While Tacitus uses the phrase *nota et familiaria castra* to refer to the soldiers' attitudes toward the camp, his reference to the special links between soldiers and civilians might also lead one to believe that the provincial population viewed the army presence in similar terms.

Tacitus does not make explicit reference to physical proximity as the cause of this social relationship, but one might assume some link between the two. Physical proximity of army bases and cities was characteristic of Syria at the time, as I will show later, and it is likely that the basing of troops in or near Antioch and in urban north Syria was one of the reasons for the relationship that Tacitus implies between Antiochenes and soldiers. His use of the term *contubernium* to describe this might be intended to invoke its loose, general meaning of “companionship,” but in the context, it seems likely that it was intended to convey a sense of physical proximity, like the literal meaning of the word, “sharing a tent in a military camp.” It may mean that Antiochenes and soldiers “shared the same quarters,” as a city and camp that coexisted or stood adjacent to one another.

There is no particular reason why Tacitus should have had an accurate knowledge of the attitudes of Syrian civilians toward the Roman army in A.D. 69, but these passages, which, one assumes, seemed plausible to his readers, do raise several interesting issues. They imply good social relations between soldiers and civilians in the region and hence assimilation or common origins, even formal family links. They suggest physical proximity between soldiers and urban civilians. All these issues are considered in this study.

In both passages, Tacitus draws distinctions between practices in the east and the west of the Roman empire. While there is a certain amount of hyperbole on the part of both Mucianus and Tacitus, it is fair to say that this distinction corresponds to a real one in the early and middle imperial periods. Tacitus shows an awareness of the general tendency for Roman military bases to develop in or next to existing urban communities in Syria, while the tendency in the west was for cities of Greco-Roman form to develop next to military bases or as the result of veteran colonization.<sup>3</sup>

In the later empire, the situation was, in some respects, reversed. While in the west existing civilian communities were walled and defended against enemy incursions, in the east new cities were founded and old

3. Of course, Tacitus indulged in a certain amount of exaggeration for literary effect, and the dichotomy between soft eastern soldiers wintering in their towns and hardy western troops in their tents does not depict reality accurately and completely, not least for the reasons discussed by Wheeler in “The Laxity of the Syrian Legions.” As Keppie noted in *The Making of the Roman Army* (1984), 191, 194 (citing Caesar *BG* 3.1, 8.5), the Roman army made use of towns to winter troops, even in the west. Likewise, more recent scholarship on the development of Roman military bases in Britain suggests that these often were located close to preconquest concentrations of population, the local versions of Greco-Roman cities.

communities refounded as civilian and military “fortress cities,” a process of de facto colonization related to strategic requirements.

The second theme of this study, the relationship between soldier and civilian, is intended to inform the general debate over the role of the Roman army as a link between center and periphery in the empire and as a catalyst for change and what is generally termed “romanization” in frontier areas. This study includes a general examination of the regional economy of Syria and Mesopotamia, emphasizing the role of the army in that sphere.

Much recent scholarship on soldier-civilian relationships in the east has dealt with the Arabian frontier in rural predesert areas and the interaction of the army, nomads, and sedentary populations. This is important and interesting work, and given similar environmental conditions in parts of Syria and Mesopotamia, such an approach could be taken there. However, this requires intensive fieldwork of a kind hitherto lacking, except in the Hauran of southern Syria.<sup>4</sup> The subject of soldiers in cities is an equally important one, and it seems reasonable to examine the existing, albeit fragmentary, evidence available for this phenomenon in Syria and Mesopotamia.

Much has been written on the general nature of the relationship between soldiers and civilians in the Roman empire and the role of the army as a link between center and periphery, a catalyst for the process of cultural change referred to as romanization. The concentration of soldiers and civilians in close proximity in urban centers in Syria suggests that investigation of this topic might be fruitful in that region.<sup>5</sup>

Until quite recently, many scholars of Roman frontier provinces assumed that the Roman army was important in the development of those provinces and in the general homogenization of the empire. Such views have often been formed in modern states with empires of their own, and it is not surprising that they present imperial control imposed by force as beneficial to colonized as well as colonizers.<sup>6</sup> However, more recent studies have presented models of development and integration in more

4. See J.-M. Dentzer, ed., *Hauran*, vol. 1, *Recherches archéologiques sur la Syrie du sud à l'époque hellénistique et romaine*, 2 pts. (1985–86).

5. Romanization in the classic northwestern European sense of the spread of Italian/Latin culture is not particularly a feature of the eastern frontier, except for the hinterland of Berytus/Beirut. However, the nature of the relationship between soldier and civilian is, and it may shed light on the processes of cultural change seen elsewhere in the Roman empire.

6. C.R. Whittaker, in *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study* (1994), 1–5, provides an interesting description of the imperial contexts in which much of this scholarship was produced.

sophisticated terms, shedding imperialist illusions, but still asserting that the Roman army was an agent of profound change in the provinces.<sup>7</sup> These studies suggest that interaction of civilian population and ruling power was mediated by the army and that the army played an important part in the development of the province. They emphasize the importance of soldiers in the development of the physical fabric of Roman provinces, drawing attention to the role of the army in the development of urbanization and the determination of the settlement pattern and hierarchy in general. The construction of roads, walls, bridges, irrigation systems, and even public buildings are considered. Such studies emphasize the importance of the army in promoting cultural and social cohesion (the spread of Latin, of religious cults, of forms of material culture) by such means as intermarriage and veteran settlement. They point to the importance of army pay, veterans' bonuses, and military markets in the development of regional economies and their integration into a wider imperial economy.<sup>8</sup>

Other scholars dispute the idea that the Roman army was a force for development and integration. They downplay the numbers and hence economic significance of veteran settlement in the countryside and point out that most things that the army built were for its own use. They focus on the exploitative nature of imperialism and of official involvement in provincial economies. In one such discussion, Brent Shaw has characterized the army as a "total institution," separate from civilian society, with its own "inward looking ethos and customary behaviour," including distinctive religious cults.<sup>9</sup> He notes a strong tendency to recruit from families of ex-soldiers and that soldiers often married other soldiers' daughters. He argues against models of economic development, emphasizes continuity over change and taxation in kind rather than cash, and maintains that Roman taxation was not a stimulating factor in the economy. Finally he states, "The Roman army was *not* halfway between the ruler and the ruled; it was *the* instrument of violent force wielded by the central power structure of the empire."<sup>10</sup>

7. See, e.g., E.W.B. Fentress, *Numidia and the Roman Army* (1979) and "Forever Berber," *Opus* 2, no. 1 (1983): 161–75.

8. K. Hopkins, in "Taxes and Trade in the Roman Empire (200 B.C.–A.D. 400)," *JRS* 70 [1980]: 101–25, uses an economic core-periphery model of the Roman empire with the army (through the media of army pay and taxation) as a link between the two elements and hence as a force for economic homogenization of the empire.

9. Shaw makes the characterization in a critique of Fentress' work on Numidia, B. Shaw, "Soldiers and Society: The Army in Numidia," *Opus* 2, no. 1 (1983): 144, 148.

10. *Ibid.*, 151.

The detailed nature of the documentary and archaeological evidence from Syria and Mesopotamia provides a unique opportunity to investigate these views of the nature of Roman imperialism and the role of the army in it. This evidence suggests that separation of soldiers and civilians is a recurring theme in Syria and Mesopotamia. While soldiers lived close to civilians in large numbers and often were drawn from the civilian population, they were separated politically, socially, and economically by official duties; by an institutional outlook on social relationships, religion, and similar matters; and by their position within an exploitative economic system. Of course, “integrated” and “separate” models of the army’s involvement in provincial civilian life are polar extremes. Reality lies between them, and we will see evidence for integration too.

The third theme of this study is investigation of some issues of identity in the Roman Near East and hence in the Roman empire in general. The layers of political, social, and legal identity within the Roman empire have long been the subject of scholarship. Similarly there has been much recent discussion of ethnicity and ethnic identity in the eastern Roman empire.<sup>11</sup> This is an important theme in Fergus Millar’s recent book, for example. Millar approaches the issue with due caution, noting the complexity of identity in the Greco-Roman world and avoiding the simple equation of ethnicity with language and the inclination to draw simple dichotomies between “Greek” and “Syrian,” “Aramaic,” or broadly “Oriental.” He also demonstrates the cultural impact of the political expansion of Rome into the region, paradoxically leading not to profound “romanization” but rather to an intensification of a broadly “Greek” city-based culture. He notes this cultural change, observes the scale of the army presence in the region, and concludes that “the Roman army must represent by far the most substantial of all nonlocal influences on the Near East.”<sup>12</sup> On a more local level, he stresses the integration of soldiers and civilians in the city of Dura-Europos.<sup>13</sup>

The present book stresses the importance of another form of identity, namely, institutional identity, which, it is argued, can supercede ethnic identity and raise even more ambiguities and complexities than those presented in other recent studies of provincial identities. Detailed analysis of the evidence, not the least of which is from Dura-Europos itself,

11. Notable is the work of Fergus Millar, including his important study *The Roman Near East, 31 BC–AD 337* (1993).

12. Millar, *Roman Near East*, 527.

13. Ibid., 130–31, 133.

suggests that Roman soldiers may have been separated from civilian population by their strong institutional identity. The evidence set out in this book suggests that soldiers were recruited partly from a subject civilian population and lost some of their “ethnic” identity because of their newfound links with the ruling power. Conversely they gained a new identity because of those links. However, this new identity was not political, like Roman citizenship, because its importance lay not only with the formal acquisition of new status and privilege but also in membership of a distinctive social group, with mores and values that promoted private cohesion parallel to the formal cohesion of the military units themselves. Individuals who had lost one identity on transition from civilian to soldier and who could never acquire a “Roman” identity in any real cultural sense found a new identity as members of an institution, namely, the Roman army. The strength of this institutional identity enhanced the ability of Roman provincial armies to take on a role as an independent political force in the empire, just as, alternatively, a sense of ethnic identity can bond those participating in an essentially political struggle for national self-determination. Under these circumstances, it seems less likely that the Roman army functioned as a major catalyst for cultural change in the region.

The conclusions drawn from these areas of investigation are somewhat paradoxical. While the study of the army and urbanization shows that large numbers of soldiers lived close to and among civilians in cities in Syria and Mesopotamia, and while social and cultural studies suggest that many of them were drawn from that same civilian population, there is also strong evidence that the institutional character of the Roman army separated soldiers from civilians socially and economically.

### The Nature of the Evidence

Despite the uniqueness and richness of the evidence regarding the army, cities, and civilians in the region, it is incomplete. This led Millar to despair of the practicality of writing synthetic studies of the very issues that form the themes of this book, preferring to reserve judgment until more material is discovered.<sup>14</sup> There is some remote chance that an important new vein of evidence will come to light and make this study redundant. However, it is more likely that our current knowledge of these

14. *Ibid.*, 108, 225.

subjects will not be transformed dramatically in the foreseeable future but will be gradually improved by continued accumulation of evidence, due to archaeological investigations or the discovery of new documentary material. In view of the variety of material used in this book, a brief survey is appropriate.

All this evidence is biased in its production, in its survival, or by academic choice. Written evidence is dominated by the literature and by documents of the politically powerful. Latin, the language of the hegemonic culture, is less prominent than Greek, the language of an earlier wave of conquerors and settlers. Also, there is written material in such languages as Palmyrene and Syriac, providing a rare alternative insight into the operation of the Roman empire. There is a wide range of Latin and Greek literary evidence available, but it is uneven in content and distribution. Literary sources belong to different genres, each with its own distinct range of subject matter and approach. These genres include narrative history, such as the works of Tacitus, Cassius Dio, Herodian, and Ammianus Marcellinus. These works offer a good deal that is of value and provide a formal political and chronological framework. A second category of literature is encyclopedic and geographical, including Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, the works of Strabo and Ptolemy, Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*, and the works of Malalas. Rhetoric is also valuable, particularly the orations of Libanius, which provide information about the society and economy of late Roman Antioch. However, they also reflect rhetorical topoi and the speaker's need to argue a specific case. Biographical works, including the *Historia Augusta*, have conventions that affect the material and its presentation. Preserved in the manuscript tradition are legal sources, such as the *Digest* and the Theodosian Code, and documentary sources, particularly the *Notitia Dignitatum*, a late fourth-century listing of officials and army units within the Roman empire.

There is also documentary evidence preserved on papyrus, parchment, and stone. Fewer Latin and Greek inscriptions survive from Syria and Mesopotamia than, for example, from Asia Minor, but there is still a substantial body of epigraphic material available. Much of this is collected in *Inscriptions Grecques et Latines de la Syrie (IGLS)*. There are also corpora from specific sites, such as Palmyra. These inscriptions are biased in quantity toward the west of the region and toward Greco-Roman urban centers, but some occur in Mesopotamia and in rural areas of Syria. There is also a sharp decline in the number of inscriptions after

the mid-third century A.D. Graffiti from Dura-Europos provide an unusual form of evidence for detailed studies of ethnicity and language use and often serve as a unique record of the function and occupation of buildings in that city. Leaving aside their value for monetary history, coin types and inscriptions also provide evidence concerning the relationship of army and cities.

The aridity of much of Syria and Mesopotamia has led to the survival of papyri from some sites, the two most important collections being papyri and parchments from Dura-Europos<sup>15</sup> and recently discovered papyri from the middle Euphrates.<sup>16</sup> Comparative evidence is provided by documents from Arabia and Judaea.<sup>17</sup> Regarding the army and provincial administration, all these sources provide detail unparalleled outside of Egypt.

Unlike most areas of the Roman empire, Syria and Mesopotamia provide us with literary and epigraphic material in languages other than Latin and Greek. Josephus noted that Greeks used the term Σύγοι for Aramaic speakers.<sup>18</sup> Aramaic, its local dialects (including Palmyrene), and Syriac were widely spoken and sometimes written in eastern parts of the Roman empire and western parts of the Persian empire, particularly in cities, such as Palmyra and Edessa, that were marginal to the core of Greco-Macedonian Syria. Perhaps such languages also were also spoken in the rural territories of even core cities of northern Syria, as in the countryside around late Roman Antioch, and among nonelite groups in

15. The final publication of these is in C.B. Welles, R.O. Fink, and J.F. Gilliam, ed., *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*, Final Report V, pt. 1, *The Parchments and Papyri*, (1959) (hereafter cited as *Dura Final Report* 5.1). I have provided full page references for this volume as well as the document numbers ("no."), equivalent to the *P. Dura* numbers employed in other works.

16. These are published in D. Feissel and J. Gascou, "Documents d'archives romains inédits du moyen Euphrate," *Journal des Savants* (1995), 65–119 (hereafter cited as *P.Euphr.*), and "Documents d'archives romains inédits du moyen Euphrate," *CRAI* (1989): 535–61. Their relationship to other papyri from outside of Egypt, particularly Judaea, is discussed by G.W. Bowersock, "The Babatha Papyri, Masada and Rome," *JRA* 4 (1991): 337–40. Also useful is H.M. Cotton, W.E.H. Cockle, and F.G.B. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): 214–35.

17. These include especially the so-called Babatha archive, published in N. Lewis, ed., *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters* (1989) (hereafter cited as *P.Yadin*).

18. Josephus *AJ* 1.144. The linguistic and cultural significance of the term *Syrian* in the ancient world is discussed by Millar in *Roman Near East*, especially chap. 1, and in his "Empire, Community, and Culture in the Roman Near East: Greeks, Syrians, Jews, and Arabs," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 38 (1987): 143–64.

the cities themselves.<sup>19</sup> Written survivals of these semitic languages include Syriac chronicles of the later empire written in and around Edessa and extensive Talmudic material from the Jewish communities of Mesopotamia as well as Judaea.<sup>20</sup> These provide an invaluable insight into some civilians' views of the Roman armies, at a popular level rather than couched in the tactful terms of petitions to Roman authorities. Palmyrene is known mostly from inscriptions, and there are Syriac papyri from the middle Euphrates. While inscriptions in these languages are overshadowed in quantity by Greek and Latin material, they form an important counterbalance to the evidence of the hegemonic cultures. One other important inscription outside the Greco-Roman tradition is the so-called *Res Gestae Divi Saporis*, a trilingual (Middle Persian, Parthian, and Greek) inscription that forms part of a rock-cut monument at Naqs-i-Rustam in Iran. It records the achievements of the Sassanian king Sapor I, including campaigns against the Roman empire in the mid-third century A.D. The inscriptions list cities captured by the king and the national origins of the troops in the Roman armies he defeated.<sup>21</sup>

There is also a wide range of archaeological evidence relevant to the study of Roman Syria and Mesopotamia. Like written evidence, this is unevenly distributed geographically and chronologically, of uneven quality, and biased in survival, recovery, and publication. A focus on Greco-Roman urban centers and other scholarly prejudices (some inevitably echoed in this study) have ensured further bias in an already biased cultural record.

Traditionally, Roman archaeology tended to limit the study of frontiers to political and military issues, recording and producing typologies of military installations and seeking evidence of troop deployments. The work of Poidebard and Stein on the eastern frontier largely falls into this

19. Millar (*Roman Near East*, 503–4) is right to be cautious about the survival of Aramaic in northern Syria. Certainly he is correct to point out the dominance of Greek in written form, even at village level. However, it is likely that Aramaic was spoken in the hinterland of Antioch at the time of its foundation in the Seleucid period and the closely related Syriac language was attested there in the fourth century A.D. by Libanius. It is clear that Aramaic survived in Dura-Europos, for example, but the written record is overwhelmingly Greek.

20. J.B. Segal's "Mesopotamian Communities from Julian to the Rise of Islam," *PBA* 41 (1955): 109–39, and *Edessa, the Blessed City* (1970) provide useful surveys of Syriac culture in late Roman Mesopotamia. A. Oppenheimer's *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period* (1983) is an important source of Talmudic material for that area.

21. A. Maricq, "Classica et Orientalia 5: *Res Gestae Divi Saporis*," *Syria* 35 (1958): 295–360 (hereafter cited as *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* (ed. Maricq)).

genre of scholarship, typified by the tradition of *Limesforschung*.<sup>22</sup> More recent archaeological work has moved beyond the purely descriptive and functional, emphasizing the social and economic character of frontiers in areas as far apart as Britain, Tripolitania, and Arabia.<sup>23</sup> The same is true of ancient history, which has seen an increased interest in synthetic and generalizing approaches to frontiers in recent years.<sup>24</sup>

Several regional survey projects have been carried out in this area. However, some of them suffer in comparison to the most recent survey projects in Greece and the western Mediterranean. They include aerial photograph surveys, such as the pioneering work of Poidebard and Stein in Iraq and Syria in the 1930s.<sup>25</sup> These projects did much to establish the ancient geography of roads and settlements in the Roman provinces of Syria and Mesopotamia but suffer from problems of chronology, which is difficult to determine without at least surface collection of recognizable pottery and often remains problematical even then.<sup>26</sup> As Oates put it, "Although I have the greatest respect for Poidebard's achievement, my own experience leads me to suspect that his map is in places a palimpsest of earlier and later material."<sup>27</sup> It is difficult to draw conclusions about the settlement patterns of any single period when the evidence consists of

22. A. Poidebard, *Le Trace de Rome dans le désert de Syrie: Le limes de Trajan à la conquête arabe, recherches aériennes* (1925–1932) (1934); R. Mousterde and A. Poidebard, *Le Limes de Chalcis: Organisation de la steppe en haute Syrie romaine* (1945); S. Gregory and D. Kennedy, *Sir Aurel Stein's Limes Report: The Full Text of M. A. Stein's Unpublished Limes Report (His Aerial and Ground Reconnaissances in Iraq and Transjordan)* (1985). For discussion of similar positivist approaches among historians of the Roman army, see the provocative discussion by R.A. Alston in *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt: A Social History* (1995), 3–4.

23. On Britain, see e.g., some of the papers in the following volumes, as representatives of a wider range of literature: M. Millett, *The Romanization of Britain: An Essay in Archaeological Interpretation* (1990); B.C. Burnham and H.B. Johnson, eds., *Invasion and Response: The Case of Roman Britain* (1979); T.F.C. Blagg and A.C. King, eds., *Military and Civilian in Roman Britain: Cultural Relations in a Frontier Province* (1984). On Tripolitania, see in general the work of the Libyan Valleys Survey, but see in particular D.J. Mattingly, "Frontiers and Farmers: Exploiting and Defending the Countryside of Roman Tripolitania," *Libyan Studies* 20 (1983): 135–53, for an overview of the scholarship on that frontier area. On Arabia, see S.T. Parker, *Romans and Saracens: A History of the Arabian Frontier* (1986); Parker, ed., *The Roman Frontier in Central Jordan: Interim Report on the Limes Arabicus Project, 1980–85* (1987).

24. Notable is Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*.

25. Poidebard, *La Trace de Rome*; Mousterde and Poidebard, *Le Limes de Chalcis*; Gregory and Kennedy, *Sir Aurel Stein's Limes Report*.

26. See S. Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture on the Eastern Frontier* (1995), 1:28–31, on the problems of dating Poidebard's evidence in particular.

27. D. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq* (1968), 67 n. 1.

indistinguishable overlaid strata of settlement from several centuries. While archaeological survey inevitably provides a picture of long-term, rather than short-term, change in the landscape, the level of resolution provided by air survey alone is particularly low. Another problem is overrepresentation of sites that survive better in marginal areas, such as desert terrain. Isaac states: "A Roman fort of 20 square metres, where perhaps 50 men were based, is still a landmark in the desert, but a legionary base in town, where thousands of men were serving, is usually obliterated and attested only through a number of inscriptions and references in literary sources. The two striking exceptions are Palmyra and Dura-Europus—both desert towns."<sup>28</sup>

More detailed studies were carried out on the ground by such individuals as Oates and Tchalenko, the latter contributing an important survey of the limestone plateau of northern Syria.<sup>29</sup> These pioneering projects have been followed up in more recent years both by new regional studies and by reevaluation of older projects. The former include Wilkinson's work in the Lower Karababa Basin (east of the Euphrates, to the south of ancient Samosata) and the Hauran survey;<sup>30</sup> the latter include Sodini's excavation-based restudy at the village of Dêhès and Tate's restudy of Tchalenko's evidence.<sup>31</sup>

Other forms of survey include projects of "surface reconnaissance"—extensive, unsystematic, and/or uneven investigations of particular areas. These include the writings of travelers of the nineteenth century and earlier twentieth century, who provide the only evidence for the topography of some sites, and early archaeological studies, primarily of architecture and inscriptions, such as those of Herzfeld and the Princeton expedition to Syria.<sup>32</sup> Earlier survey and reconnaissance projects focused on sites

28. Isaac, *Limits*, 133, criticized by S.T. Parker in "The Eastern Roman Frontier: Nomads and Other Security Threats," *JRA* 5 (1992): 467–72.

29. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*; G. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques de Syrie du nord*, 3 vols. (1953–58).

30. T.J. Wilkinson, *Town and Country in Southeastern Anatolia*, vol. 1, *Settlement and Land Use at Kurban Höyük and Other Sites in the Lower Karababa Basin* (1990); Dentzer, *Hauran*.

31. J.-P. Sodini et al., "Dêhès (Syrie du nord), campagnes I–III (1976–1978): Recherches sur l'habitat rural," *Syria* 57 (1980): 1–304; G. Tate, *Les Campagnes de la Syrie du nord du IIe au VIIe siècle*, vol. 1 (1992).

32. F. Sarre and E. Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat-und Tigris Gebiet*, 4 vols. (1911–20); H.C. Butler, E. Littmann, D. Magie, D.R. Stuart, eds., *Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria*, 4 vols. (1907–49). A useful modern work, essentially a sophisticated guidebook, is T.A. Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey: An*

with elaborate architecture and epigraphic evidence, not unreasonable in an area where the locations of even substantial classical cities often remain unknown. However, this focus distorts our knowledge of the lower end of the settlement pattern, particularly smaller rural sites. Also, detailed pottery chronologies, the principal means of dating sites by surface survey, are rare in this region. Less attention has been paid to the relationship between settlement and landscape than in recent survey work further west, an unfortunate omission in a region where landscape and climate are so crucial. However, many omissions have been corrected in the recent studies of agriculture and rural settlement in the Hauran by Gentelle and Villeneuve<sup>33</sup> and in the reevaluation of Tchalenko's work by Sodini and Tate. Sodini's excavation at Dêhès and his reinterpretation of Tchalenko's evidence has revealed the value of sample excavation in survey projects.

There are also studies and excavations of individual sites.<sup>34</sup> Some areas have been inaccessible in recent decades, so information is often dated and methodologically limited, with clearing of architectural phases rather than detailed stratigraphic recording. Excavation of Dura-Europos by French and American groups in the 1920s and 1930s took this form, although the quantity and quality of the evidence outweighs the problems caused by the nature of excavation and recording.<sup>35</sup> The value of the published accounts of these excavations is enhanced by a current Franco-Syrian project at Dura.<sup>36</sup> American excavations at Antioch were of simi-

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*Architectural and Archaeological Survey*, vols. 3–4 (1989–90), which provides brief summaries of visible remains on some of the sites that are in modern Turkey.

33. P. Gentelle, "Éléments pour une histoire des paysages et du peuplement du Djebel Hauran septentrional, en Syrie du sud," in *Hauran*, vol. 1, *Recherches archéologiques sur la Syrie du sud à l'époque hellénistique et romaine*, ed. J.-M. Dentzer (1985), pt. 1, 19–62; and F. Villeneuve, "L'Économie rurale et la vie des campagnes dans le Hauran antique (Ier siècle av. J.-C. – VIIe siècle ap. J.-C.): une approche," in *Hauran*, vol. 1, *Recherches archéologiques sur la Syrie du sud à l'époque hellénistique et romaine*, ed. J.-M. Dentzer (1985), pt. 1, 19–62; and 63–136, respectively.

34. Evidence for military sites on the eastern frontier is collected in Shelagh Gregory's comprehensive study, *Roman Military Architecture on the Eastern Frontier*, 3 vols. (1995–97).

35. See F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos (1922–1923) (1926)*; *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters: Preliminary Reports of the First to Ninth Seasons of Work (1929–52)* (hereafter cited as *Dura*).

36. See *Doura-Europos, études* 1986, *Syria* 63 (1986) (hereafter cited as *Doura-Europos* I); *Doura-Europos, études* 1988, *Syria* 65 (1988) (hereafter cited as *Doura-Europos* II); *Doura-Europos, études* 1990, *Syria* 69 (1992) (hereafter cited as *Doura-Europos* III).

lar quality.<sup>37</sup> There are a long-term Belgian excavation and epigraphic study at Apamea and a Polish excavation at Palmyra.<sup>38</sup> Flooding caused by dam construction on the Euphrates has led to salvage projects on Roman sites, including Italian work at Kifrin on the Euphrates and international projects at Zeugma.<sup>39</sup> Other fieldwork has been less intensive, involving the recording of standing and surface remains and sometimes small stratigraphic soundings. This includes Oates' work at Singara, Wagner's monograph on Zeugma, and such architectural studies as Karnapp's study of Resafa.<sup>40</sup> Finally, certain classes of material, especially pottery, are generally poorly documented in older excavation reports, inhibiting economic studies typical of modern archaeology. There is often a local focus, with imported material that would set a site in the wider Roman world sometimes passing unrecognized. This is much less of a problem with recent work than it was in the past.

### The Development of the Roman Eastern Frontier: A Historical Overview

Any general survey of the history of the Roman eastern frontier runs the risk of passing over ground covered quite capably in recent years by Isaac and (to A.D. 337 at least) by Millar.<sup>41</sup> However, a brief summary may be helpful.

37. See *Antioch on the Orontes*, vols. 1–4 (1934–52).

38. E.g., see *Colloque Apamée de Syrie: Bilan des recherches archéologiques 1965–1968* (1969) and *Colloque Apamée de Syria: Bilan des recherches archéologiques 1969–1971* (1972); M. Gawlikowski, ed., *Palmyre*, vol. 8, *Les Principia de Dioclétien, "Temple des Enseignes"* (1984), on the "Camp of Diocletian."

39. For Kifrin, see A. Invernizzi, "Kifrin and the Euphrates *Limes*," in *The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East*, ed. P. Freeman and D. Kennedy (1986), 357–81; idem, "Kifrin-Βηχχουφρεΐν," *Mesopotamia* 21 (1986): 53–54; and E. Valtz, "Kifrin, the 'limes' fortress" in *The Land between Two Rivers* (1985), 111–20. For Zeugma, see D. Kennedy, *The Twin Towns of Zeugma: Rescue Work and Historical Studies* (1998), which includes details of Kennedy's own work and summaries of others'.

40. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 97–106; J. Wagner, *Seleukeia am Euphrat Zeugma* (1976); W. Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer von Resafa in Syrien* (1976).

41. Millar, *Roman Near East*, pt. 1; Isaac, *Limits*; Other useful surveys of the historical development of the eastern frontier of the Roman empire are M. Sartre, *L'Orient romain* (1991); E. Frézouls, "Les Fluctuations de la frontière orientale de l'empire romain," in *La Géographie administrative et politique d'Alexandre à Mahomet* (1981), 177–225; and M. Gawlikowski, "The Roman Frontier on the Euphrates," *Mesopotamia* 22 (1987): 77–80. A useful collection of source materials for the later history of the frontier is M.H. Dodgeon and S.N.C. Lieu, *The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars, A.D. 226–363* (1991).

When the Roman province of Syria was organized by Pompey the Great in 64 B.C., Seleucid Syria had broken down to a core of the hellenized cities of northern Syria, with a number of autonomous kingdoms and cities further south.<sup>42</sup> The composition of the region at this time was essentially that presented by Pliny the Elder, the earliest Roman province being confined to the northwestern tetrapolis, with client kingdoms to the south.<sup>43</sup>

#### Augustus to Nerva

This period saw a shift from the mixture of client kingdoms and organized provinces, which characterized the republican and Augustan east, to the Flavian situation, with most of the frontier area annexed to produce a zone of directly controlled provinces. At the beginning of the period, Armenia was a nominally independent kingdom subject to greater or lesser degrees of Roman and Parthian control, and Cappadocia and Commagene were client kingdoms under Roman control. The core of Roman Syria was the Hellenistic district of Seleucia proper; the Euphrates was its nominal eastern boundary. The southern boundary is less clearly defined; the area included such client kingdoms as Emesa, Ituraea, and the Herodian kingdom. Palmyra was described as “between Rome and Parthia” by Pliny the Elder and hence was perhaps autonomous, although Roman influence in the area is attested epigraphically by Pliny’s time and his comment probably was anachronistic.<sup>44</sup> From A.D. 6 to A.D. 41, Judaea was a province under a procuratorial governor.

Through the Julio-Claudian period, there was a general trend to replace client kingdoms with provinces. Cappadocia was annexed as a province in A.D. 18 by Tiberius, who also made Commagene part of the province of Syria until it was reestablished as a kingdom by Gaius in A.D. 37. Adjustments to the Herodian kingdom were frequent, and after the

42. J. Grainger, *The Cities of Seleukid Syria* (1990), 170f.

43. Pliny *N H* 5.79–82.

44. Ibid., 5.88: *privata sorte inter duo imperia summa Romanorum Parthorumque* [with a destiny of its own between the two great empires of the Romans and the Parthians]. The tax law of Palmyra (*OGIS* II, 629 = *IGRR* III, 1056) shows that the Palmyrenes accepted a pronouncement of Germanicus in A.D. 18–19 as applying to their city, and G.W. Bowersock (“Syria under Vespasian,” *JRS* 63 [1973], 133–40, at 135–36) suggests that the city was incorporated into the province at that time. See also J.F. Matthews, “The Tax Law of Palmyra: Evidence for Economic History in a City of the Roman East,” *JRS* 74 (1984): 157–80, at 161–62.

death of Herod Agrippa in A.D. 44, most of Palestine was annexed under the control of Roman procurators, although Agrippa II maintained power in Upper Galilee for much of the second half of the century. The aftermath of the Judaeen insurrection of A.D. 66–73 saw its reannexation as a province with a legionary garrison under a *legatus*. There was conflict between Rome and the Parthians over the alignment of Armenia from A.D. onward, including a threat to Syria and the deployment of Roman forces east of the Euphrates in A.D. 64. This war was resolved in Rome's favor by Cn. Domitius Corbulo in A.D. 66.

Most changes came in the Flavian period. Commagene was permanently annexed in A.D. 72, mostly within the province of Cappadocia. Client kingdoms of southern Syria gradually came under direct control, and Palmyra became part of the Roman province by this time, if not before.<sup>45</sup> By the time of the accession of Trajan in A.D. 96, the eastern frontier consisted of a string of directly controlled provinces, namely, Cappadocia, Syria, Judaea, and Egypt, bordered by the Armenian kingdom, Parthia, and the Nabataean kingdom.<sup>46</sup>

### Trajan to the Severans

Trajan's reign saw expansion eastward, including annexation of the Nabataean kingdom as Arabia Petraea in A.D. 106 and conquest and annexation of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria in A.D. 114. The emperor advanced into Parthia, capturing Ctesiphon in A.D. 115. In the south, Roman forces advanced down the Euphrates by way of Dura-Europos (a Roman arch there records their presence), getting as far as Mesene on the Persian Gulf.<sup>47</sup> However, most of these eastern conquests (except Arabia) were abandoned as provinces after Trajan's death and a large-scale revolt in A.D. 117. Nevertheless, Rome perhaps retained nominal authority in the Euphrates valley as far east as Mesene.<sup>48</sup> Parthian authority in the middle Euphrates seems to have been weak at this time.

45. The process by which Palmyra came under direct Roman control is obscure. Bowersock suggests it happened at the time of Germanicus' eastern visit in A.D. 18–19. *AE* 1933, 205 is a milestone of A.D. 75 marking a road built from Palmyra to Sura by the *legatus pro praetore* Ulpius Traianus, and this may be significant for the integration of the city into the Roman province.

46. The complex political status of the south of Syria in this period is discussed by Millar in *Roman Near East*.

47. *Dura* 4, 56–68, no. 167; Cassius Dio 68.28–29.

48. See D.S. Potter, "The Inscriptions of the Bronze Herakles from Mesene," *ZPE* 88 (1991): 277–90.

The next major military campaign in the region was that of Lucius Verus in A.D. 162–66, which was successful in Armenia and Mesopotamia. It culminated in the destruction of Seleucia on the Tigris and Ctesiphon, advanced the Roman frontier east into the bend of the Euphrates, and established Roman control over northern Mesopotamia. This area was annexed as a province in A.D. 195, after Septimius Severus' first Parthian war. His second Parthian war resulted in another sack of Ctesiphon and in the establishment of the province of Mesopotamia with a legionary garrison. The immediate hinterland of Edessa in Osrhoene seems to have remained an independent kingdom until the king was deposed by Caracalla in A.D. 213/4, with a brief restoration of the monarchy in A.D. 240.<sup>49</sup> Severus divided Syria into two new provinces, Syria Coele and Phoenice.

### The Rise of the Sassanian Dynasty

The overthrow of the Parthian rulers by the Sassanian dynasty began a new phase of conflict between Rome and the Persian empire. The new Iranian rulers were successful in campaigns in northern Mesopotamia in the A.D. 230s and 240s until driven back by Gordian in A.D. 243 and then in Sapor I's two great campaigns in the A.D. 250s. The first of Sapor I's campaigns, probably in A.D. 252, saw a Roman defeat at Barbalissus followed by the overrunning of Syria and the sack of Antioch, and in the second, in A.D. 260, Valerian was captured near Edessa.<sup>50</sup>

Mesopotamia was restored to Roman rule after Odenathus' defeat of the Persians in A.D. 262 and the subsequent Roman defeat of Palmyra in A.D. 272/3. In A.D. 298, Galerius repulsed a Persian attack on Mesopotamia, and the Roman empire acquired territories east of the Tigris.<sup>51</sup> By the reign of Diocletian, there were further changes to the structure of the eastern provinces. The Diocletianic Verona list of provinces shows admin-

49. See Millar, *Roman Near East*, 112, 125–26, 472–81, 553–62, on this complicated issue. Also, J. Wagner's "Provincia Osrhoenae," in *Armies and Frontiers in Roman and Byzantine Anatolia*, ed. Stephen Mitchell (1983), 103–30 provides a good summary, to be modified in detail by J. Teixidor's "Les Derniers Rois d'Édesse d'après deux nouveaux documents Syriaques," *ZPE* 76 (1989): 219–22.

50. For Antioch, see D.S. Potter, *Prophecy and History in the Crisis of the Roman Empire: A Historical Commentary on the Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle* (1990), 270–73, 290–308, 338–40.

51. On Rome's Transjordanian territories, see J.F. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (1989), 53–54.

istrative divisions of Phoenice, Syria Coele, Augusta Euphratensis (Commagene and Cyrrhестice), Osrhoene, and Mesopotamia, all within the diocese of *Oriens*.

The fourth century saw frequent conflict as the Romans sought to protect Galerius' gains, especially in northern Mesopotamia. In A.D. 363 the emperor Julian engaged in a campaign that was successful as far as Ctesiphon, but he was killed in the ensuing retreat, and his successor Jovian made a peace treaty ceding the Transtigritane territories and Mesopotamia east of the Khabur River, including the important fortress city of Nisibis.<sup>52</sup> Thereafter conflict increasingly shifted to the north, to Armenia and the Caucasus (Armenia was partitioned between Rome and Persia in the reign of Theodosius in ca. A.D. 386), and the fifth century was relatively peaceful in Syria and much of Mesopotamia.

For the first two centuries A.D. most of the Roman army was deployed in the core area of hellenized Syria, and much of the discussion of the impact of Roman power on that area must center on the interaction of soldiers and civilians in cities. The Severan period saw an increase in the numbers of troops deployed in the east and the occupation of new territories with a less predominantly hellenized population.

The rise of the Sassanian dynasty in the third century A.D. led to more intensive conflict between the empires, and the geographical shift eastward of the Roman army that had begun under Septimius Severus became more permanent. The new foci of warfare and military deployment were northern Mesopotamia and the Euphrates valley in eastern Syria. The heartland of hellenized northern Syria sometimes was attacked directly, but for the most part its importance lay in the generation of wealth and agricultural produce to supply troops further east. New urban military centers developed in the east, fortress cities that figure prominently in the warfare of the later Roman period.

### The Physical Manifestations of the Historical Frontier

The concept of a frontier in the Roman world and the meaning of the Latin word *limes* were both extremely complex,<sup>53</sup> and a Roman frontier was rarely as concrete as the impression conveyed by such remains as Hadrian's Wall. Even when such remains exist, their interpretation is far

52. On the treaty, see *ibid.*, 185–87.

53. The meanings of the term *limes* are discussed by B. Isaac in "The Meaning of the Terms *Limes* and *Limitanei*," *JRS* 78 (1988): 125–47.

from certain. Air surveys by Poidebard and Stein revealed fortifications in northern Mesopotamia, east to the Tigris, along the Euphrates, across to Palmyra, and through much of southern Syria.<sup>54</sup> Mouterde and Poidebard claimed there was a second, inner *limes* around Chalcis.<sup>55</sup> However, while the political frontier ran roughly north–south, communication routes, such as the Euphrates valley and the fertile areas of northern Mesopotamia, ran east–west, separated by areas of arid steppe. Axes of defense often ran along these routes rather than north–south along the nominal frontier. Hence the late Roman defenses of the Euphrates valley consisted of a chain of fortress cities—from east to west, Circesium, Zenobia, Callinicum, Sura, and Neocaesarea. In northern Mesopotamia the emphasis seems to have been on defending the cities per se rather than as nodes in a linear defense of territorial boundaries. At some periods fortifications existed within the political limits of the empire for internal security and local refuge (examples are the road systems of southern Syria and the “Chalcis *limes*” as interpreted by Isaac).<sup>56</sup> As noted earlier, there are also problems in dating sites located by aerial survey. Oates’ characterization of the landscape recorded by these methods as a “palimpsest of earlier and later material” is nowhere more true than in the frontier areas. The only really well dated fortified line is the *Strata Diocletiana* in southern Syria, where installations are dated by inscriptions. However, these installations may have defended the lateral road rather than the territory behind it.<sup>57</sup> Some periods may even be characterized by the *lack* of fixed military installations. This seems to have been typical of the early empire, when legions were held back behind the Euphrates frontier.

Hence it is rarely possible to use the archaeological evidence of military installations in the east to draw conclusions about frontier policies at certain periods. On the contrary, information from literary sources about the location of the frontier at given times may help us to date recorded military installations in those areas.

54. Poidebard’s *La Trace de Rome* and Gregory and Kennedy’s *Sir Aurel Stein’s Limes Report* are the main publications of the aerial surveys of the eastern frontier. D. Kennedy and D. Riley’s *Rome’s Desert Frontier from the Air* (1990) provides a useful discussion of these aerial survey projects and a basic typology of military installations based on their work.

55. Mouterde and Poidebard, *Le Limes de Chalcis*.

56. Isaac, “The Meaning of the Terms *Limes* and *Limitanei*.”

57. Kennedy and Riley (*Rome’s Desert Frontier*, 77, 181–83, 205) discuss some of these forts. See also Isaac, *Limits*, 171.

### The Size and Composition of the Syrian and Mesopotamian Garrisons

The evidence for the composition and size of the armies deployed in Syria and Mesopotamia is unevenly distributed and includes a mix of literary and epigraphic material. There is scattered evidence from the first and second centuries A.D., and inscriptions and papyri from Dura-Europos provide a detailed case study of the units deployed at one outpost in the later second and early third centuries A.D. The *Notitia Dignitatum* includes a list of units and their locations, although the period or periods for which it provides evidence is uncertain. There is little epigraphic evidence from subsequent centuries, and we are forced to rely on few and scattered literary references, which provide a very incomplete picture. The following is not a complete and detailed account of the eastern army but a general survey of its size and character.<sup>58</sup>

#### The Julio-Claudians

From the Julio-Claudian period to the later third century, the core of the Roman army in the east was composed of the *legiones* of citizen heavy infantry, with a nominal strength of about five thousand men each, sometimes broken up into detachments called *vexillations*. They were supplemented by auxiliary troops, Roman-officered provincials who obtained citizenship through their military service. They were organized in *cohortes* of lighter infantry, with nominal strengths of about five hundred men (quingenary cohorts) or about one thousand men (milliary cohorts), and *alae* of cavalry, mostly quingenary, a few milliary. In addition to units within the regular organization of the Roman army, the eastern army was supplemented by the troops of allied kings and by *numeri* of individuals outside the Roman army proper, notably, Palmyrenes. The complex issue of the origins of recruits to these different units is considered in chapter 4. At this time the titles of legions, such as that of *III Scythica*, were of historical significance only and did not refer to the place of origin or

58. More detailed treatment of the eastern armies can be found in *PWRE*, s.v. *legio* (Ritterling); H.M.D. Parker, *The Roman Legions* (1928); M.H. Gracey, "The Roman Army in Syria, Judaea, and Arabia" (D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1981); D. Kennedy, "The Auxilia and Numeri Raised in the Roman Province of Syria" (D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1980); Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*; Isaac, *Limits*. V. Chapot's *La Frontière de l'Euphrate de Pompée à la conquête arabe* (1907) is still of value despite its age.

deployment of the unit, at least until Septimius Severus raised three legions with the title *Parthica*, to garrison his new province of Mesopotamia.

An early reference to the size of the Syrian garrison comes from Josephus, who refers to three legions in 4 B.C.<sup>59</sup> By A.D. 23, Tacitus shows that this number had increased to four legions.<sup>60</sup> The *legiones III Gallica*, *III Scythica*, *VI Ferrata*, *X Fretensis*, and *XII Fulminata* are all attested, although the detailed picture at any one time is complicated. Several bases are mentioned for these legions, including one near Laodicea (perhaps Apamea), Cyrrhus, Raphanaea, and another on the Euphrates, perhaps Zeugma.<sup>61</sup> Little is known of the auxiliary units of this period. Tacitus implies that their numbers were approximately equal to the legionaries, and he refers to Corbulo's army of A.D. 55 as containing *par civium sociorumque numerus* [an equal number of citizens and allies].<sup>62</sup> There are several references to the provision of auxiliary troops by client kings at this time,<sup>63</sup> and locally organized troops may have predominated over Roman auxiliary units proper until the demise of most of the client kingdoms in the Flavian period. Little is known of unit identities or deployment.

In addition to the regular garrison, troops including legions and vexillations of legions were brought in from other provinces for major campaigns. This was true from Corbulo's campaigns to the Byzantine period. Much of the evidence for these forces is summarized by Chapot,<sup>64</sup> and further information has emerged from epigraphic studies of some of the legionary bases discussed in chapter 1.

The location of legionary bases and Tacitus' descriptions of Corbulo's campaigns in the reign of Nero provide our limited evidence for the strategy pursued on the eastern frontier at this time. The legions at least seem to have been held back, concentrated for offensive action, like Corbulo's seizure of bridgeheads across the Euphrates in A.D. 62.<sup>65</sup>

59. Josephus *AJ* 17.286; *BJ* 2.40.

60. Tacitus *Ann.* 4.5.

61. *Ibid.*, 2.79.3, 2.57; Josephus *BJ* 7.18, 7.17. L. Keppie, in "Legions in the East from Augustus to Trajan" (in *The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East*, ed. P. Freeman and D. Kennedy [1986] 411–29), discusses the evidence in detail. It is likely that there was a legionary base in or near Antioch for at least part of this time, but there is no conclusive evidence.

62. Tacitus *Ann.* 4.5, 13.8.

63. Josephus *AJ* 17.286; Tacitus *Ann.* 13.38, 15.26.

64. Chapot, *La Frontiere de l'Euphrate*, 79–62.

65. Tacitus *Ann.* 15.9.

Mostly legions and auxiliaries seem to have been kept together on a strategic level, not split between frontier defense and reserve, but sometimes the latter were sent forward ahead of the legions tactically or operationally.<sup>66</sup> There are some references to fortifications, but apparently of a limited and temporary nature.<sup>67</sup> In general, the army on the Euphrates frontier in northern Syria seems to have been kept on a mobile basis; there seems to have been no solid linear frontier with permanent or semipermanent military occupation.

Isaac contrasts the offensive posture of these forces on the Euphrates with the evidence of more scattered deployment of legionary forces around the fortress at Raphanaea in southern Syria in the second century A.D., where there survive remains of forts with epigraphic evidence for legionary detachments commanded by centurions.<sup>68</sup> These seem to have been deployed mainly to meet local security needs. While this evidence is later than Corbulo's campaigns, it seems likely that the difference was due to differing local requirements between northern and southern Syria rather than to a changing pattern of deployment over time.

### The Flavian Period

The Jewish revolt of A.D. 66–73 and Flavian provincial reforms led to a number of changes in legionary deployments, many of them temporary. An inscription of A.D. 75 refers to detachments of units engaged in canal construction near Antioch, and it may represent the whole garrison of the province, except for cavalry units, which are not mentioned at all.<sup>69</sup> Units represented are the *legiones III, IIII, and VI*, along with *XVI Flavia Firma*. There are also twenty auxiliary cohorts and *Antiochenses*, perhaps a civic militia.<sup>70</sup> Thereafter three *legiones, III, IIII, and VI*, seem to have formed the normal garrison, along with about twenty cohorts and *alae* of auxiliaries.<sup>71</sup> This constituted a total of about thirty thousand troops in the

66. Tacitus *Ann.* 15.9, 13.36.

67. E.g., Tacitus *Ann.* 13.36.

68. Isaac, *Limits*, 134.

69. D. van Berchem, "Une Inscription flavienne du musée d'Antioche," *Museum Helveticum* 40 (1983): 185–96. The inscription is discussed further by the same author in "Le Port de Séleucie de Piérie," *Bjb* 15 (1985): 47–87.

70. See van Berchem, "Le Port de Séleucie," 84.

71. For example, the diploma *CIL XVI, 35* shows three *alae* and seventeen cohorts in Syria in A.D. 88, and M.M. Roxan, *Roman Military Diplomas, 1954–1977* (1978) (hereafter cited as *RMD* 1), no. 3, issued on the same day, shows five more *alae* and two cohorts.

normal garrison of the province. The regular legionary bases of this period were Samosata, Zeugma, and Raphanaea, although it is not clear whether legions were routinely broken up into dispersed vexillations at this period as they were throughout the second century A.D.

### The Second Century A.D.

Most of the second century A.D. saw continuity of the post-Flavian picture. *Legio XVI Flavia Firma* was at Samosata by the first half of the second century, perhaps replacing *VI Ferrata* in A.D. 134 when the latter was sent to Judaea. *Legio IIII Scythica* at Zeugma and *III Gallica* at Raphanaea completed the legionary garrison. A diploma of A.D. 156/7 refers to sixteen cohorts and three *alae* (with room on the inscription for a possible fourth) in Syria.<sup>72</sup>

Septimius Severus raised three new legions *Parthicae*, probably in A.D. 194/5, two of them to garrison the new province of Mesopotamia.<sup>73</sup> These were based at Singara (*I Parthica*) and perhaps Nisibis or Rhesaina (*III Parthica*).<sup>74</sup> *Legio II Parthica* was raised at the same time, with its permanent base at Albanum in Italy. However, evidence from Apamea (see chap. 1 and app. A) shows that it was deployed there for campaigns on the eastern frontier for much of the first half of the third century. Little is known of the auxiliary troops deployed in the province at this time. Presumably their ratio to legionaries was similar to Syria's. Alexander Severus later used Osrohenian and Parthian auxiliaries on the Rhine frontier, Aurelian used Mesopotamians against the Goths, and auxiliaries may have been recruited in Mesopotamia for local use.<sup>75</sup> Septimius Severus not only increased the geographical extent of the eastern frontier but raised substantial new forces for service in those new territories, creating a combined garrison of some fifty thousand army personnel for Syria and Mesopotamia, with extra forces (particularly *legio II Parthica*) added for major campaigns.

These diplomas probably document all the auxiliaries deployed there. Also see D.L. Kennedy, "Cohors XX Palmyrenorum: An Alternative Explanation of the Numeral," *ZPE* 53 (1983): 214–16, for other evidence for a twenty-cohort auxiliary garrison in Syria.

72. *CIL* XVI, 106.

73. See D. Kennedy, "The Garrisoning of Mesopotamia in the Late Antonine and Early Severan Periods," *Antichthon* 21 (1987): 61.

74. See *ibid.*, 60–61.

75. Herodian 6.7.8; *HA*, V. *Aurel.* 11.3.

## The Third Century A.D.

Little is known of the deployment of units in the third century, the next relatively clear picture being provided by the *Notitia Dignitatum*. However, the epigraphic and papyrological evidence from Dura-Europos provides us with a detailed picture of military deployments at that outpost from the Roman conquest of the town in A.D. 165 to its fall to the Sassanians in A.D. 256/7, and we can draw some general conclusions from this picture.

Specific discussion of the Roman military presence at Dura-Europos and its general implications for the relationship between the army and the inhabitants of towns follows in subsequent chapters. However, some observations about the garrison are appropriate here as they may be relevant to other frontier garrisons. Most important is evidence for a mixed garrison of legionary vexillations and auxiliary troops. For about a century, there is evidence for detachments of the two legions of Syria Coele (where Dura belonged after the Severan division of Syria), namely, *III Scythica* and *XVI Flavia Firma*; the single legion of Phoenice, *III Gallica*; and also *X Fretensis* (from Judaea) and *III Cyrenaica* (from Bostra in the province of Arabia). The division of legions into vexillations for detached service seems to have been regular practice by the third century.<sup>76</sup>

The earliest nonlegionary troops attested are not regular Roman auxiliary troops but a detachment of Palmyrene archers under a *strategos*.<sup>77</sup> The first regular auxiliary unit attested is the *cohors II Ulpia equitata*, which was in the garrison in the late second century, probably from the reign of Commodus.<sup>78</sup> The best documented auxiliary unit in the garrison is *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, a milliary *cohors dromedaria* (an infantry cohort with a detachment of camel riders) first attested in A.D. 208 and present until the fall of the town to the Persians in A.D. 256/7. Papyrus unit rolls from the site show it was based at Dura, with detachments in outposts along the Euphrates.<sup>79</sup> Other auxiliary units were deployed in or

76. Isaac (*Limits*, 139) suggests that coins from Tyre, Sidon, and Damascus with the numbers of legions on them dating from the Severan period to the mid-third century indicate vexillations based in those cities. This issue is discussed in more detail in chap. 1, below.

77. *Dura* 7/8, 83f., nos. 845–46 (A.D. 168); 170–71.

78. *Dura* 1, 42, no. 1; *Dura* 5, 226–29, no. 561 (A.D. 194); perhaps *Dura* 2, 83–86, no. H.1.

79. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 308–64, nos. 100–101.

near Dura temporarily, perhaps for specific campaigns. A vexillation of σπεῖρη β' Παφλαγόνων (*cohors II Ulpia Paphlagonum*) and a σπία β' ἱππική (a *cohors equitata*, perhaps *cohors II Ulpia equitata*) each inscribed altars at Dura, the former dated to A.D. 250/1.<sup>80</sup> There are also references to *cohors III Augusta Thracum* and *cohors XII Palaestinorum*, apparently deployed on the lower Khabur.<sup>81</sup> Other evidence from this period tends to support this pattern of deployment, with legions broken down into dispersed vexillations and with auxiliary units dispersed to guard outposts.

#### The Fourth Century A.D.

There is little epigraphic evidence for the army of the fourth century, and the only significant regular historical source is Ammianus Marcellinus. The *Notitia Dignitatum* provides unparalleled detail on the deployment of the eastern army. However, the history of this document is complicated.<sup>82</sup>

For the purposes of this study, the exact dates of the information in the *Notitia Dignitatum* and of its composition are not particularly important. However, the picture of the development of that document proposed by A.H.M. Jones in *The Later Roman Empire* is sensible. He suggests that three levels are represented. The first is the Diocletianic period, when the army represented in the *Notitia* was largely organized. Jones suggests that the eastern frontier forces are more or less as Diocletian left them, and he notes that the structure of units in eastern and some other provinces is regular and adheres to that implied by Diocletianic laws.<sup>83</sup> The second period is that actually represented by the deployment of forces in the *Notitia*, incorporating a few post-Diocletianic changes. Jones suggests that this is between A.D. 395 and A.D. 413, almost certainly shortly after the earlier date.<sup>84</sup> The third level is the final compilation of the document, irrelevant to this study, since the latest elements concern the western half

80. *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 110–14, nos. 971–72.

81. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 134–41, no. 26 (A.D. 227); 153–59, no. 30.

82. The history of the study of the *Notitia Dignitatum* is summarized by Guido Clemente in *La "Notitia Dignitatum"* (1968). The most comprehensive study of the Roman army depicted in the document as a whole is D. Hoffmann, *Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia Dignitatum* (1969).

83. A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey*, 3 vols. (1964), vol 1 57–60, 357 (hereafter cited as *LRE*).

84. *Ibid.*, vol 1: 347–51.

of the empire.<sup>85</sup> Thus it is reasonable to use the *Notitia* to get a general picture of the Diocletianic army in the east and a more accurate picture of the army of the later fourth century. Ammianus covers the army of Constantius and Julian, between Diocletian and the *Notitia*. Several interesting themes emerge. These include the continuity of at least the titles of many units known from the Severan period and earlier; the addition of large numbers of new units, particularly cavalry; the emergence of central field armies (the *comitatus*) distinct from provincial garrisons; and the existence of many locally recruited units (*indigenae*—again, especially of cavalry) and units with titles suggesting barbarian origins.

At the time of the composition of the *Notitia*, and certainly as early as the reign of Diocletian, the eastern army divided into two distinct elements: frontier troops, or *limitanei*,<sup>86</sup> under provincial *duces*; and mobile armies, or *comitatus*, based in the region and at Constantinople under the command of such officials as the *magister militum per Orientem*.

The army at this period was very different from that of the early Principate, with legions of relatively low status. After the *Constitutio Antoniniana* of A.D. 212, all recruits from within the empire would have been citizens. From the third century A.D., cavalry was increasingly important, and it provides the majority of units named in the *Notitia Dignitatum*. Generally units were smaller at this time. Duncan-Jones' analysis of papyrological and other evidence suggests some legions were as small as one thousand men, while some legionary detachments were as small as five hundred.<sup>87</sup> Cavalry *alae* and units called *equites* are attested with as few as 120 men, auxiliary cohorts with 160. While more units are recorded in the *Notitia Dignitatum* than are known from the Severan period, most were smaller than their Severan counterparts. A minimum estimate of the size of the garrison of Syria, Phoenice, Mesopotamia, and Osroene would be about forty thousand, about the same as in the Severan period, but this is a strict minimum, while earlier figures cited were nominal maxima.<sup>88</sup>

85. See *ibid.*, vol 1: 353.

86. The general current view is that *limitanei* at this time were regular troops under *duces* deployed in frontier provinces, and hence the troops listed under the control of such officials in the *Notitia* probably can be described as such. For this view, see Isaac, *Limits*, 208f., and "The Meaning of the Terms *Limes* and *Limitanei*."

87. R.P. Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy* (1990), 105–17, 214–21.

88. The number is calculated by multiplying Duncan-Jones' numbers by the numbers of each unit type listed in those provinces and in the *comitatus* of the *magister militum per*

The continuity of legions from the Severan period to the *Notitia Dignitatum* is quite striking. In Phoenice there is *III Gallica* (*Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 32.31) at Danaba, in Syria *III Scythica* at Oresa and *XVI Flavia Firma* at Sura (Or. 33.23; 28), and in Mesopotamia *I Parthica* at Constantina and perhaps *III Parthica* at a base probably to be identified as Apatna (Or. 35.25).<sup>89</sup> None of them is in the same location as its Severan equivalent, but they remain in the same area. Another Severan legion, *II Parthica*, is located at Cefa in Mesopotamia (Or. 36.30), redeployed from its Severan base at Albanum in Italy (although it spent much of the third century at Apamea). There are new legions too. In Phoenice there is *I Illyricorum* based at Palmyra (Or. 32.30), and in Osrhoene there is *IV Parthica* at Circesium (Or. 35.24), the former perhaps raised by Aurelian in Illyria and brought to Syria to oppose Zenobia of Palmyra.<sup>90</sup> Jones suggests that both were raised in the reign of Diocletian; certainly they existed by A.D. 315/6.<sup>91</sup> In the *comitatus* of the *magister militum per Orientem*, there were four legions elevated to the status of *pseudocomitatenses*, *I Armeniaca*, *II Armeniaca*, *VI Parthica*, and *IV Italica*, and Jones suggests that they had formed the garrison of Diocletian's Transjordan territories.<sup>92</sup> The *pseudocomitatus* also includes a unit not discussed by Jones, the *Transjordanians*.<sup>93</sup> These probably were part of an earlier Transjordan garrison. Ammianus refers to the execution by the Persians of *Transjordanians* at Amida in A.D. 359, although this may just be an ethnic applied to individual recruits in multiple units rather than a unit designation.<sup>94</sup>

Other units of the eastern frontier provinces in the *Notitia* are cavalry units denoted by the term *equites*, often grouped under the collective

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*Orientem* in the *Notitia*. This gives a minimum. Of course, many units probably were stronger particularly in the *comitatus*. This total does not include units of the *comitatus* from Rome or Constantinople deployed for particular campaigns.

89. *I Parthica* is called *Nisibena* in *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 36.29, suggesting a previous deployment to Nisibis. However, it may have been based on Singara and/or Rhesaina in the Severan period, and Ammianus (20.6.8) refers to it as part of the garrison of Rhesaina in A.D. 360.

90. See Chapot, *La Frontière de l'Euphrate*, 78–79.

91. *LRE*, vol. 1: 357. *ILS* 8882 from Koptos in Egypt, with a date of A.D. 315–16, refers to vexillations of *legiones III Gallica* and *I Illyricorum*, presumably detached from Syria Phoenice.

92. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 7.49, 50, 55, 54; *LRE*, vol. 1: 57, 369.

93. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 7.58.

94. Ammianus Marcellinus 19.9.2; the context suggests that these were members of the garrison of Amida, but Ammianus does not mention them as a unit in his account of the Amida garrison (18.9.3).

term  *vexillationes*  when part of the  *comitatus* . There is rarely enough information to decide which units are of Diocletianic origin and which are later, although the  *equites felices Honoriani Illyriciani*  in Mesopotamia (Or. 26.22) clearly were raised or given a new title in the reign of Honorius, after A.D. 395. Twelve  *equites*  units are listed in Phoenice (Or. 32.18–29), including seven qualified as  *indigenae* , four  *sagittarii* , and one  *Saraceni* . Another group is just described as  *Saraceni* . Ten  *equites*  appear in Syria (Or. 33.16–22, 25–27), four of them  *indigenae* . There are nine in Osrhoene (Or. 35.15–23), six of them  *indigenae* ; and there are ten in Mesopotamia (Or. 36.19–28), again six  *indigenae* . A number of units in each province are titled  *equites Illyriciani* , qualified as  *Dalmatae* ,  *Mauri* ,  *scutarii* ,  *promoti* , or  *ducatores* . Dalmatian cavalry were used by Gallienus, and Dalmatian and Moorish cavalry were brought to Syria from Illyria by Aurelian for the war against Palmyra.<sup>95</sup> By the date of the  *Notitia Dignitatum* , these titles probably were honorary or referred to their equipment or manner of fighting rather than to their place of recruitment at that time.

Other unit categories,  *alae*  and  *cohortes* , seem to correspond to earlier auxiliary troops,<sup>96</sup> and they include a high proportion of units whose names refer to peoples from outside of the empire or from traditionally warlike parts of the empire. They may have been recruited as early as the reign of Diocletian, but Liebeschuetz suggests that the recruitment of Germans at least may have been more common under Constantine, Constantius, and Julian.<sup>97</sup> These units are categorized as follows:

Phoenice	7 <i> alae </i> (one each <i> Francorum </i> , <i> Alamannorum </i> , and <i> Saxonum </i> )	5 <i> cohortes </i> (one <i> Alamannorum </i> )
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95. See Hoffman,  *Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia Dignitatum* , 247–48; Zosimus 1.40.2 (on Gallienus' Dalmatian cavalry), 1.52.3–4 (reporting that Aurelian, having campaigned previously in Illyria, used Dalmatian and Moorish cavalry against Zenobia in Syria).

96. M.M. Roxan, in "Pre-Severan Auxilia Named in the  *Notitia Dignitatum* " (in  *Aspects of the Notitia Dignitatum* , ed. R. Goodburn and P. Bartholemew [1976], 59–79) discusses some of the evidence for continuity among the  *auxilia*  from the second to the fifth centuries. She suggests one certain link ( *Notitia Dignitatum* , Or. 33.33:  *Cohors I Ulpia Dacorum*  under the  *dux Syriae* ) between the second and fourth century and five other possible links from Syria, Phoenice, and Osrhoene.

97. J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz,  *Barbarians and Bishops: Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom*  (1990), 7, 16.

Syria	2 <i>alae</i> (one <i>Iuthungorum</i> )	4 <i>cohortes</i> (one <i>Gotthorum</i> )
Osrhoene	6 <i>alae</i> (one <i>Parthorum</i> )	2 <i>cohortes</i>
Mesopotamia	3 <i>alae</i> (one <i>Francorum</i> , one <i>Carduenorum</i> )	2 <i>cohortes</i> (one <i>Arabum</i> , one <i>Zabdenorum</i> )

Other groupings of units relevant to this study are the *comitatus*. Of these, the one most likely to spend much time—indeed, perhaps all its time—in the provinces under discussion was that of the *magister militum per Orientem*, listed at *Notitia Dignitatum*, *Oriens* 7. He had broad responsibility for defense of the east, and presumably much of his army was either engaged in warfare in Mesopotamia or Osrhoene or based in reserve in Syria, perhaps near Antioch at the *magister's* headquarters. The bases of *comitatus* units are not listed in the *Notitia*. Besides the *pseudocomitatenses* mentioned earlier (and four other units with that status), ten vexillations are listed, eight just called *equites* (one qualified as *Parthi clibanarii*—Parthian armored cavalry), one of *bucellarii*, and one *cuneus clibanariorum Palmirenorum*. The *bucellarii* are the first unit known with this title, which is not usual before the later fifth and sixth centuries.<sup>98</sup> They may be one of the later additions to the document. The *clibanarii Palmirenorum* probably were descendants of Palmyrene armored cavalry encountered by Aurelian.<sup>99</sup> There are two *auxilia Palatina*, preserving the names of Honorius and Arcadius, and hence some of the latest eastern units in the *Notitia*. There are nine legions besides the *pseudocomitatenses* noted earlier. One of them, *V Macedonica* (*Or.* 7.39), is a pre-Severan legion from Moesia, while the rest bear titles referring to the emperors Constantius, Valens, and Theodosius. While the origins of the *comitatus* probably lie in the period before Diocletian,<sup>100</sup> it seems that the organization of the *comitatus* of the *magister militum per Orientem* in the *Notitia Dignitatum* largely dates to the post-Diocletianic period.

Other evidence on the fourth-century army is found in Ammianus' account of the Persian wars of A.D. 359–60. He does not provide much information on the composition of Roman field armies at this time, but he does list the wartime composition of several garrisons. The first is Amida,

98. See *ibid.*, 43–47.

99. See Zosimus 1.50.3–4.

100. See Potter, *Prophecy and History*, 49.

with its usual garrison of *V Parthica*, along with six legions moved there specifically for the campaign.<sup>101</sup> These were *X Fortenses*, *legio XXX*, two legions known as *praeventores* and *superventores*, and the Magnentian and Decentian legions. Of these, only *X Fortenses* (= *Fretensis*) is known for certain from other sources, as part of the garrison of Palestine earlier and subsequently in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (Or. 34.30). *V Parthica* seems to have been one of the sequence of *I* to *VI Parthicae* found in the *Notitia*, although apparently the unit was not reformed after its destruction at Amida. *Legio XXX* may have been the old *XXX Ulpia Victrix*, raised by Trajan and initially deployed on the Rhine frontier, perhaps part of the garrison of Gaul in the *Notitia*.<sup>102</sup> The Magnentian and Decentian legions presumably are named after those usurpers and hence can be dated to A.D. 350–53. Ammianus indicates that they had arrived recently from Gaul, and their fighting qualities as depicted by him suggest that they may originally have been personal guard units.<sup>103</sup> There are several units of *praeventores* and *superventores* listed in the *Notitia* as auxiliary cohorts, none of them closer than Scythia or Moesia. Ammianus refers to them as new recruits under the same officer as the one who led them to Amida, so probably they were raised shortly before A.D. 359. None of these units are listed in the garrison of Amida in the *Notitia*, which names two units of *equites*.<sup>104</sup> Another unit in the Amida garrison of A.D. 359 consists of *comites sagittarii*, described by Ammianus as freeborn barbarian cavalry.<sup>105</sup> Two such units are named in the *Notitia*, one *Iuniores* (Or. 5.30), one *Armeni* (Or. 5.31). Both are in the *comitatus* of the *magistri militum praesentales* based at Constantinople.

The next garrison described is that of Singara, in A.D. 360. This consisted of *I Flavia* and *I Parthica*, along with *indigenes plures cum auxilio equitum* [many local men with the support of cavalry].<sup>106</sup> Finally there is the garrison of Bezabde, also in A.D. 360, made up of *II Flavia*, *II Armeniaca*, *II Parthica*, and archers of the local *Zabdiceni*.<sup>107</sup> Of these, *I* and *II Parthicae* are Severan in origin and found respectively at Constantina and Cefa in Mesopotamia in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (Or. 36.29 and 30).

101. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.9.3.

102. Seeck, the editor of the *Notitia Dignitatum*, identifies the *Truncensimani* of Oc. 7.108 as *XXX Ulpia Victrix*.

103. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.9.3, 19.5.25

104. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 36.19, 21.

105. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.9.4.

106. Ibid., 20.6.8.

107. Ibid., 20.7.1.

There are *I* and *II Flaviae* and a *II Armeniaca* (the last are *pseudo-comitatenses*) in the *comitatus* of the *magister militum per orientem* in the *Notitia* (Or. 7.45, 46, 50). The Zabdicenian archers may be connected with the *cohors XIV Valeria Zabdenorum* based in Mesopotamia in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (Or. 36.36). Probably they are not the same unit, but both units were raised in the area of the Great Zab and Little Zab Rivers, eastern tributaries of the Tigris.

The scale and something of the nature of the Roman garrison of Syria and Mesopotamia has been revealed in this introduction. The next stage is to examine some of the specific aspects of its relationship with the civilian population of the region, starting with a study of the army and urbanization in part 1.

PART 1

The Roman Army and Cities in Syria  
and Mesopotamia



## CHAPTER 1

# City into Fortress: The Roman Army and Cities in Syria and Mesopotamia to the Mid-Third Century A.D.

Roman and Greek authors, writing on events from Corbulo's eastern campaigns to the reign of Severus Alexander, described Roman soldiers in the east, particularly those of the Syrian garrison, as lax and ill disciplined.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly this judgment conformed to a common Roman literary topos regarding easterners, one repeated by some more modern scholars.<sup>2</sup> A closer investigation of the ancient texts reveals some interesting reasons for the troops' supposed laxity. They are depicted as unsoldierly, accustomed to luxury and unaccustomed to military procedures and discipline. In short, they were more like civilians than soldiers. Tacitus (*Histories*) suggests that the Syrian legions enjoyed special, close relations with the local civilian population. Other texts (Tacitus' *Annals* and Cassius Dio) indicate that troops were accustomed to spend time in towns and lived in houses, especially in winter. In the *Histories*, Tacitus contrasts Syrian troops with German legions, whose winter quarters were in the open air—undoubtedly doing so with some exaggeration for literary effect.

These accounts of troops in towns and cities contrast with the general picture in the western provinces at this time. Military sites there were often placed close to preexisting civilian settlements, but for the most part the army was based in distinctive buildings and settlements planned and

1. Tac. *Ann.* 13.35; Tac. *Hist.* 2.80.3; Fronto *Princ. Hist.* 11–12 (= Teubner ed., ed. Naber, pp. 206–7); Fronto *Ad Princ. Ver.* 2.1 (= Teubner ed., ed. Naber, pp. 128–29); Cassius Dio 78.3.4, 80.4.1–2.

2. See Wheeler, "The Laxity of Syrian Legions," for a thorough discussion of the topos, although Wheeler may go too far in dismissing the significance of references to towns in the passages discussed. A more modern expression of this ancient prejudice occurs at *Dura* 6, 304: "graffiti found in the billeted houses of Dura reflect the lack of discipline and demoralization of which both Tacitus and Dio speak."

built for military use. Traditional models for the development of civilian urbanization in the western provinces emphasize the importance of the transformation of military sites into civilian cities and the development and growth of civilian settlements close to military sites.<sup>3</sup> Of course, pre-Roman civilian settlement differed between the western and eastern parts of the empire. Societies of the late Iron Age in the west displayed considerable sophistication and social complexity, and large nucleated settlements were features of such societies in pre-Roman Britain and Gaul. However, from a Roman perspective such settlements were very different from cities of the Mediterranean. In the Near East, complex states had existed for millennia before the Romans arrived, and the walled city was a physical manifestation of that social complexity. Greco-Macedonian expansion into those regions in the late fourth century B.C. provided further impetus to development of cities as a normal form of settlement, and many new Greco-Macedonian cities were founded as garrison towns and veteran colonies. After their conquest of these regions, the Romans merely maintained a well-established relationship between armies and towns and cities. In the west the army-city relationship developed at a later date, as Roman urbanization there was a later phenomenon, itself partly a result of the presence of the army.

This study of the Roman army in cities and towns has two aims. The first is to consider what impact the requirements of the Roman army and defense had on urban development in Syria and Mesopotamia. As I mentioned earlier, it has long been assumed that the Roman army stimulated the urbanization of provinces in the western empire. However, the Roman authors previously cited imply that the army in Syria fitted into the existing urban structure of the province. One must consider whether epigraphic and archaeological evidence confirms this picture or contradicts it and whether it is true of the whole period of Roman occupation of Syria and Mesopotamia or just of the first two and a half centuries of the imperial period, to which these written accounts refer.

The second aim is to examine the archaeological and epigraphic evi-

3. This is a basic premise of G. Webster's edited volume *Fortress into City* (1988), a book describing the impact of the Roman army on the urbanization of Britain, at such sites as Glevum (Gloucester), Isca (Exeter), and Camoludunum (Colchester). The title of this chapter is a reversal of the title of that book. However, long-held views of the relationship between army and cities in the west have been challenged by scholars working from both western and eastern perspectives. For the former, see Millett, *The Romanization of Britain*, 69–78. For the latter, see Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 1:82, arguing that the western pattern was not the norm but a geographically and chronologically limited phenomenon.

dence for the spatial relationship between soldier and civilian in cities. Did soldiers and civilians live and work in the same areas of a community, or was there physical separation of the two groups? Did they make use of the same buildings—temples, entertainment structures—or were separate areas used by soldiers, even when they were off duty?

### Greco-Macedonian and Parthian City Garrisons

The Hellenistic period shows important associations between armies and urban centers. First of all, cities were garrisoned. The locations and planning of many Seleucid cities show their military importance for defense against external enemies and for control of the local population. Grainger discussed these issues with regard to the cities founded by Seleucus I Nicator. He suggested defense was the primary factor in determining city location, and he emphasized the importance of each city's fortification walls and acropolis, the latter often set off to one side of the city with direct access to the outside.<sup>4</sup> This made defense against the cities' inhabitants easier in the event of civil unrest.<sup>5</sup> Several Seleucid cities became Roman military centers. Apamea, for example, was an important military center of the Seleucid kingdom and subsequently a Roman base. Cyrrhus and Seleucia Zeugma were Seleucid and Roman bases. Dura-Europos has Hellenistic and Parthian defenses, a Parthian-period garrison of Palmyrene troops is attested there by inscriptions, and the city had a Roman garrison from the second century A.D.

The Seleucid army also had a demonstrable effect on urbanization in Syria and Mesopotamia through settlement of veterans in conquered territory. The issue of Seleucid colonization is discussed by Cohen.<sup>6</sup> He suggests that families of soldiers, often of local origin, were admitted into the colonies from the first and that other members of the indigenous population were excluded at first for reasons of stability but were often admitted at a later stage in the colonies' development.<sup>7</sup> In general, it is clear that the Seleucid army had an impact on urbanization and civic life

4. Grainger, *Cities of Seleucid Syria*, 82.

5. Ibid., 86–87, maps 6A–F.

6. G.M. Cohen, *The Seleucid Colonies: Studies in Founding, Administration and Organization* (1978).

7. Ibid., 33, 35. B. Bar-Kochva (*Judas Maccabaeus: The Jewish Struggle against the Seleucids* [1989] 98–101, 105–11) argues for an even higher degree of ethnic exclusivity (even in marriage) in the Seleucid colonies of Syria.

in Syria and Mesopotamia, but the detailed interaction of troops and civilians is poorly documented. “Hellenization” was not an active aim of the colonizers, and institutions of Seleucid colonies often were exclusive and defining rather than inclusive and ecumenical.<sup>8</sup>

The Parthians also employed urban garrisons in areas that subsequently became part of the Roman empire. One clear example is Dura-Europos, where Palmyrene archers were based in the mid-first century A.D., shortly before the Roman capture of the city.<sup>9</sup> They were foreigners but had some cultural affinities (in language and religion) with the non-Greek population of the city, and their strangeness was diminished by the citizens’ familiarity with Palmyrene travelers. They also provide a good example of continuity into the Roman occupation, as there were also Palmyrene troops in the Roman garrison of the city. A parchment found at Dura mentions a Parthian *φρουράρχος* at Phaliga on the Euphrates, who seems to have commanded a garrison in that small community.<sup>10</sup>

### The Roman Army and Urbanization in Syria and Mesopotamia from Augustus to the Mid-Third Century A.D.: Geographical and Topographical Studies

The Roman army affected the urbanization of Syria and Mesopotamia in two ways. The first involved deployment of serving soldiers in or close to existing cities and towns. This was characteristic of the eastern provinces, in contrast to the western empire, where such cities did not exist. One might further subdivide this category, taking as one group urban legionary bases and other cities in Syria with smaller legionary and auxiliary garrisons. This group includes Apamea, Zeugma, Raphanaea, Cyrrhus, Samosata, and Palmyra. The next group includes middle Euphrates garrison towns, such as Dura-Europos and Kifrin, and then Severan garrisons of northern Mesopotamia. Another distinct group includes Seleucia Pieria and Antioch on the Orontes, important in administrative and logistical support of wars conducted further east.

The second way in which the Roman army influenced the urban structure of Syria and Mesopotamia in this period was veteran colonization.

8. See Cohen, *The Seleucid Colonies*, 88; P. Briant, “Colonization hellénistique et populations indigènes,” *Klio* 60 (1978): 57–62.

9. See *Dura* 7/8, 264f.; 279, no. 909, dated to ca. A.D. 150 by the editor. Cf. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 24 n. 3.

10. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 109–116, no. 20.

This is a much less significant feature of the region but is of some interest nevertheless and is considered later in this chapter.

### Legions and Auxilia in Towns and Cities in the Early and Middle Empire

Characteristic of the eastern provinces in the first two and a half centuries of the Roman empire was the colocation of legionary bases with existing cities, particularly those with Hellenistic military associations. The evidence for these bases is meager. Little systematic archaeological work has been done at these sites, except at Apamea, and even there the location of the military camp has been suggested only tentatively by the excavators. Recent fieldwork at Zeugma has not shed much more light on the situation there. Most of the evidence for these bases is epigraphic and historical and is not topographically precise. The evidence for the location of auxiliary units is even more sketchy and almost exclusively epigraphic. We know even less about the legionary fortresses of the republican period, although it is clear that units were sometimes based in cities.<sup>11</sup>

Five cities of Roman Syria provide fairly clear evidence—literary, epigraphic, or archaeological—of having been legionary bases between the first century and mid-third century A.D. These are Zeugma, Cyrrhus, Apamea on the Orontes, Samosata, and Raphanaea. These sites show several common characteristics.

One such characteristic applying to all except Raphanaea is a Hellenistic military association before the establishment of the Roman military bases. Zeugma was founded ca. 300–299 B.C. by Seleucus Nicator to defend a bridge over the Euphrates linking Seleucid Mesopotamia and Syria.<sup>12</sup> Cyrrhus bears a Macedonian name and hence may have been a Seleucid colony, although its date is not certain.<sup>13</sup> Frézouls, who has examined the site, notes that its Byzantine wall overlies Hellenistic

11. The evidence is poor and mostly reflects temporary presence in wartime. The best example is Antioch, a base for Cassius' troops in 51 and 43 B.C. (Cicero *Ad Att.* 5.18.1; *Ad Fam.* 12.15.7). Apamea and Tyre apparently housed Roman troops in 40 B.C. (Cassius Dio 48.25–26). For this republican evidence, see app. A.

12. See Grainger, *Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 50–51.

13. See E. Frézouls, "Cyrrhus et la Cyrrhestique jusqu' à la fin du Haut-Empire," *ANRW* II.8 (1977): 164–97, on the Macedonian name and possible colony. Grainger (*Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 41) suggests it was founded by Seleucus Nicator, although the earliest references are to 285 B.C. (Plutarch *Dem. Poliorcetes* 32, possibly anachronistic) and 221 B.C. (Polybius 5.50.7).

polygonal stonework that may be the original city wall.<sup>14</sup> Apamea probably was a foundation of Seleucus Nicator and later contained an important Seleucid arsenal, with the royal military headquarters, stables, and housing for elephants.<sup>15</sup> Samosata seems to have been a later foundation, but still it was a city, the capital of the client kingdom of Commagene before the Roman annexation in A.D. 72. The site had considerable strategic importance as a crossing place on the upper Euphrates and thus almost certainly had pre-Roman military associations.

Scattered literary references suggest that Zeugma was a legionary fortress in the first century A.D. and was the permanent base of *legio IIII Scythica* in the second century.<sup>16</sup> Tacitus indicates that there was a military base at Cyrrhus in A.D. 18,<sup>17</sup> and military tombstones suggest army activity there in subsequent centuries. There is historical evidence for the use of Apamea as a military base in the first century B.C., but a number of inscriptions of the first half of the third century A.D. attest that the city served as the base of *legio II Parthica*. This legion served on the eastern frontier for extended periods, away from its permanent base at Albanum in Italy. Samosata may have received a Roman garrison in A.D. 72 when Commagene was annexed. The only direct evidence of a legionary base there is from Ptolemy's *Geography* and a few inscriptions, all of the second century A.D.

In each case, the Roman legionary base developed at an existing city with known or probable Hellenistic military associations. An exception to this was Raphanaea in southern Syria. The legionary base there perhaps began in the first century A.D., and it was the permanent base of *legio III Gallica* in the second century A.D. There is no evidence that it was a significant urban center before the arrival of the Roman army. A.H.M. Jones suggested that it was a local tribal capital that grew in size and status because of the Roman military presence.<sup>18</sup> If so, urban development there was analogous to some western legionary bases rather than to other Syrian fortresses. There were similarities between southern Syria and contemporary western provinces, as both lacked developed urban centers. A possible eastern parallel, known from Procopius' *Buildings*

14. Frézouls, "Cyrrhus et la Cyrrestique," 191.

15. Grainger, *Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 58–59 discusses the evidence for its foundation. For the arsenal, see Strabo 16.2.10.

16. There is a detailed discussion of evidence regarding these sites in app. A.

17. Tac. *Ann.* 2.57.

18. A.H.M. Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, 2d ed. (1971), 267.

(3.4.15–20) is Melitene in Armenia, which, Procopius states, began as a legionary fortress and subsequently developed as a civilian community, gaining civic status in the reign of Trajan.

Leaving aside Raphanaea, we see that in Roman Syria in the Principate, the pattern of legionary bases was determined by the existing urban structure. Only at Raphanaea did a military base perhaps stimulate the development of a formal city. Thus the Roman military presence in Syria in the Principate had little impact on the urban development of the province, conforming instead to an existing pattern.

We know little about the topographical relationship of the legionary bases to nearby civilian communities. The evidence for the exact location of the Syrian legionary bases relative to their cities is very limited. There is no evidence at all from Cyrrhus. On the basis of surface finds of stamped legionary tiles, Wagner suggests that the camp of *legio IIII Scythica* at Zeugma was just outside the Hellenistic city walls (fig. 2). More recent studies have suggested that the camp may have been further away from the city or even on the eastern side of the Euphrates, on the bank opposite from Zeugma itself.<sup>19</sup> The fortress at Apamea may have been on the spur of a plateau about half a kilometer to the east of the city, overlooking a major road (fig. 3).<sup>20</sup> The legionary base at Samosata may have been outside or on the outer edge of the northern part of the ancient city.<sup>21</sup> All of these locations are conjectures, based on limited evidence.

In the absence of clearer topographical evidence from Syrian sites, it is appropriate to examine Bostra in Arabia, to see what Millar describes as “a rare case when we can give some meaning to the statement that a legion was stationed ‘at’ a particular town.”<sup>22</sup> Bostra was a Nabataean royal center before the Roman annexation of Arabia in A.D. 106. Relatively little is known of the pre-Roman topography, but it seems to have

19. The original study is that of Wagner, *Seleukeia am Euphrat Zeugma*. The same author’s “Legio IIII Scythica in Zeugma am Euphrat,” in *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms* no. 2 (1977), 517–39, also summarizes much of the evidence concerning the legionary base. The alternative views are summarized in Kennedy’s *The Twin Towns of Zeugma* and discussed in app. A.

20. See J.-Ch. Balty, “Apamée de Syrie (1986): Nouvelles données sur l’armée romaine d’orient et les raids sassanides du milieu du IIIe siècle,” *CRAI* (1987), 239–40, discussed in app. A.

21. The evidence is derived in part from T. Goell, “Samosata Archaeological Excavations, Turkey, 1967,” in *National Geographic Society Research Reports*, 1967 (1974), 83–109; Ü. Serdaroglu, *Surveys in the Lower Euphrates Basin*, 1974 (1977); and M. Özdoğan, *Lower Euphrates Basin 1977 Survey* (1977). It is discussed in detail in app. A.

22. Millar, *Roman Near East*, 94.

been a substantial urban community, probably fortified with a wall circuit.<sup>23</sup> Aerial photographs of the site show the outline of a large (ca. 17 ha) rectangular enclosure on the north edge of the city, which seems to have been the fortress of *legio III Cyrenaica* (fig. 4).<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the legions based at Syrian cities were also housed in purpose-built camps adjacent to, rather than within, the city. In contrast, evidence from Jerusalem suggests that the early garrison there was based within the city, although it is not clear whether that was also true of the later legionary fortress.<sup>25</sup>

The five cities discussed so far are the only ones for which reliable evidence of a legionary base exists. A few other urban sites provide epigraphic evidence that a legion or part of a legion was based there in the Principate. Beroea, modern Aleppo, is the provenance of three funerary inscriptions perhaps referring to serving soldiers: one of a *miles singularis* (or *super numerarius*?) of *legio IIII Scythica*, another of a *[mi]l[es] leg(ionis) VII (Claudiae?)*, and a third of an *eq(ues) coh(ortis) VI Pr(ae)toriae*.<sup>26</sup> There are also two inscriptions mentioning veterans.<sup>27</sup> Beroea was a Hellenistic military site with a substantial citadel and thus bears some similarities to the known legionary bases.<sup>28</sup>

Detachments of legions perhaps were based in cities of the south Syrian and Phoenician coast. Coins of the first half of the third century A.D. from Tyre, Sidon, and Damascus bear the numbers of *legiones III Gallica* and *VI Ferrata*, and Isaac suggests that they refer to legionary vexillations there.<sup>29</sup> A few inscriptions from the same area seem to refer to serving soldiers. Two, perhaps of the second century, are from Sidon, and one is from Byblos.<sup>30</sup> It is clear that legions on the eastern frontier recruited

23. See M. Sartre, *Bostra des origines à l'Islam* (1985), 57–61.

24. See *ibid.*, 96–97; Isaac, *Limits*, 123–24; Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*, 124–25.

25. See Isaac, *Limits*, 279–80, 427–28.

26. IGLS I, 178 (CIL III, 6705; M.A. Speidel, “*Legio IIII Scythica*, its Movements and Men,” in *The Twin Towns of Zeugma on the Euphrates: Rescue Work and Historical Studies*, ed. D. Kennedy (1998), 183, no. 27, suggests a veteran rather than a serving soldier), 179 (CIL III, 192), 180 (CIL III, 6704).

27. CIL III, 191 (*leg VIII Augusta*); IGLS I, 181 (*ala I Thracum veteranorum*).

28. See Grainger, *Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 61.

29. Isaac, *Limits*, 139, discussed later in this chapter, in the context of colonies.

30. The two from Sidon are CIL III, 151 (*II Traiana Fortis*) and 152 (*III Gallica*). The former refers to a *beneficiarius* and hence probably an individual on detached service, rather than to a unit. The latter may refer to a detachment of the local legion. The inscription from Byblos is CIL III, 181 (cf. AE 1991, 1575, for possible first-century A.D. dating on the basis of *X Fretensis*). It perhaps represents a garrison detached from a local legion. Any or all of these inscriptions may refer to veterans rather than serving soldiers, although no specific evidence of veteran status is preserved on any of them.

heavily from the Phoenician cities (see chap. 4), and local vexillations may have been a focus for such recruitment. Conversely, recruitment of legionaries in Phoenician cities may be enough to explain the coins and inscriptions, which may refer not to serving soldiers but to veterans who returned to their home cities.

There is relatively little evidence of any kind for the location of auxiliary units in the Principate. Few “traditional” western-type auxiliary forts of this period are known, Tell el Hajj being a notable exception.<sup>31</sup> This may be due to poor survival of evidence and limited archaeological work. Alternatively Gregory, in her study of Roman fortifications of the region, suggests, as does Isaac, that urban deployment of troops explains the absence of forts.<sup>32</sup> Certainly the best-documented auxiliary bases in Syria—Palmyra and Dura-Europos—were cities. Also, some legionary bases, such as Apamea, provide us with epigraphic evidence of auxiliaries based temporarily at those cities as elements of larger expeditionary forces.

Inscriptions from Palmyra refer to a range of auxiliary units deployed there from the mid-second century to the mid-third century.<sup>33</sup> They mention *ala I Ulpia singul(arium)* and *ala (Thracum) Herculiana*,<sup>34</sup> and at various times Palmyra was also the base of *ala I Ulpia dromadarorium milliaria* (a camel unit), the *cohors II Augusta Thracum*,<sup>35</sup> and an *ala Vocontiorum*.<sup>36</sup> Later inscriptions refer to a *cohors I Fl(avia) Chal(cidenorum) equit(ata)* (an infantry cohort with a cavalry detachment).<sup>37</sup> Isaac suggests that reuse of these inscriptions in the *principia* of the tetrarchic camp implies that military installations stood in that area in the second and third centuries too although no remains have been found.<sup>38</sup> Kennedy and Riley note the existence of a large rectangular enclosure that might have

31. See P. Bridel et al., *Tell el-Hajj in Syrien* (1974); P. Bridel and R.A. Stucky, “Tell el Hajj, place forte du limes de l’Euphrate,” in *Le Moyen Euphrate: Zone de contacts et d’échanges*, ed. J.-Cl. Margueron (1977), 349–53.

32. Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 1:58; Isaac, *Limits*, 133.

33. Much of the evidence is summarized in H. Seyrig, “Antiquités syriennes 12: Textes relatifs à la garnison romaine de Palmyre,” *Syria* 14 (1933): 152–68.

34. *AE* 1933, 210, 211 (A.D. 150), 208 (A.D. 167–68), and 209.

35. *AE* 1947, 171 (A.D. 155–59); cf. *CIL* XVI, 106, a diploma where the Latin title of the dromedary unit is given in full.

36. *AE* 1933, 214; cf. M.P. Spiedel, “*Numerus* ou *ala Vocontiorum* à Palmyre?” *Syria* 49 (1972): 495–97 (post-A.D. 183).

37. E.g., Seyrig “Textes relatifs à la garnison romaine de Palmyre,” 166–67, no. 10 (A.D. 244–47); Gawlikowski, *Palmyre*, vol. 8, 125, no. 40 (A.D. 206–7), and 126, no. 41; *AE* 1991, 1573–74.

38. Isaac, *Limits*, 144 n. 218.

been a camp north of the tetrarchic city wall (fig. 5).<sup>39</sup> Finally, the inscription mentioning the *ala Vocontiorum* records that they built a *campus*, a training ground, somewhere in or near the city.

Comparisons might be drawn with Gerasa in the first century A.D. (at that time part of the province of Syria, subsequently in Arabia), as a number of inscriptions of *ala I Augusta Thracum* of that date were found there, although there is no clear evidence of where the unit was located in or near the city.<sup>40</sup> The most detailed evidence for auxiliary troops in towns and cities comes from Dura-Europos.

### Dura-Europos and Urban Garrisons of the Middle Euphrates

Most of the bases discussed so far were located in the core of hellenized Roman Syria. However, from the reign of Trajan, and more permanently in the later second century A.D., Romans gained control of the middle Euphrates and northern Mesopotamia. These were former Seleucid territories, with cities that had passed from Seleucid to Parthian control. In contrast to the meager evidence from the Syrian legionary bases, Dura-Europos, in the middle Euphrates valley, provides a wealth of evidence regarding the spatial relationship between army and city. Dura lies farther east than the other cities discussed, between the steppe and the Euphrates. In addition to Dura, there are some other similar but less well documented sites on the middle Euphrates.<sup>41</sup>

#### *Dura-Europos*

The city of Dura-Europos (fig. 6), particularly the nature of Roman military occupation there, is well documented by epigraphic and archaeological evidence. Conditions there favored the survival of the material remains. There was no substantial reoccupation after the city's fall to the Sassanians in A.D. 256/7, and its remoteness ensured that the city remained relatively

39. Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*, 135–37, fig. 83.

40. C.B. Welles, in “The Inscriptions,” *Gerasa: City of the Decapolis*, ed. C. Kraeling (1958), 446–47, nos. 199–201. Other inscriptions from the site refer to *legiones III Cyrenaica* and *VI Ferrata* (ibid., 450, no. 211, and 435, no. 171).

41. Millar (*Roman Near East*, 438) is right to stress the potentially unrepresentative character of the disproportionate evidence from Dura, “which from the perspective of the Roman Empire has given it almost too great an importance.” As he notes, Dura “lasted as a ‘Roman’ place for less than a century.” However, a cautious but detailed reading of this evidence is crucial for any understanding of what Millar (ibid., 131) calls the army “as it were from below, from within local society.”

undisturbed. Aridity ensured survival of perishable materials, such as papyrus, parchment, textiles, wood, leather, and paint. The remains were studied in excavations spanning fourteen years by Cumont (1922–26) and a Yale University group (1928–37) with Rostovtzeff as guiding spirit. Since 1982 a Franco-Syrian team under Pierre Leriche has engaged in restudy and conservation of the site.<sup>42</sup> Artifacts were recovered in quantity and in context and were well recorded and published for the time. The site provides an exceptional conjunction of topographic and architectural features with inscriptions, papyri, and graffiti providing detailed information on the function of structures and the date and nature of their occupation.

Like many of the cities discussed already, Dura-Europos was a Seleucid foundation with an important military function. Grainger suggests that Europos was founded by Seleucus I Nicator, located to defend Babylon against the Antigonids shortly after his acquisition of that city in 312 B.C.<sup>43</sup> Its position overlooking the Euphrates is one of obvious strategic importance. The extent to which Hellenistic elements of the fortifications survive has been disputed, but it is likely that the city developed with city walls, a citadel, and a royal garrison.<sup>44</sup> The site remained fortified in the Parthian period. Rebuildings of the walls date to that period, and there is evidence of a garrison of Palmyrene troops shortly before the Roman capture of the city.<sup>45</sup>

Dura was occupied briefly by the Romans in A.D. 115, as is demonstrated by an inscription from a nearby triumphal arch.<sup>46</sup> The Roman

42. See *Dura-Europos I*; *Dura-Europos II*.

43. Grainger, *Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 43–44. Throughout the later history of the city, Seleucus Nicator was paid cult as its founder. For example, a relief from the Temple of the Gadde depicts the king (Rostovtzeff, *Dura-Europos and Its Art* [1938], pl. I.1). An inscription found in the course of excavation (*Dura* 3, 54–55, no. D151) refers to Σέλε[υκος] Νικάτω[ωρ], and the excavators suggest that it was a dedication by Nicanor, the founder of the city. However, there is no clear evidence of the date of the inscription. The Roman colonial title of the city, preserved in a papyrus of A.D. 254 (*Dura Final Report* 5.1, 166–69, no. 32), also apparently includes Seleucus' name.

44. The basic study of the fortifications is by Von Gerkan, in *Dura* 7/8, 4–61, although Rostovtzeff disagreed with Von Gerkan's interpretation. The most recent evaluations of the fortifications are by P. Leriche: "Chronologie du rempart de brique crue de Dura-Europos," in *Dura-Europos I*, 61–82; and "Dura-Europos grecque, parthe et romaine," *Mesopotamia* 22 (1987): 57–66. Gregory's *Roman Military Architecture*, 2:152–63, provides a useful survey.

45. *Dura* 7/8, 264f. and 279–81, no. 909, dated to ca. A.D. 150 by the editors (cf. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 24 n. 3).

46. *Dura* 4, 56–58, no. 167. An inscription found below the *mithraeum* refers to the restoration of the doors of a temple in A.D. 116–17, the originals having been removed by the Romans before their withdrawal from Dura (*Dura* 7/8, 129, no. 868).

occupation proper lasted from A.D. 165 to A.D. 256, when the city was attached to the Roman province of Syria (later Syria Coele) and garrisoned by a range of auxiliary units and legionary vexillations. The garrison lived within the city walls in close proximity to, and sometimes intermingled with, the civilian population. In A.D. 256/7 the city fell to the Sassanian Persians, and it seems to have been abandoned shortly afterward. At any rate, by the second half of the fourth century A.D., Ammianus was able to refer to it as *desertum oppidum* and *Duram desertam*.<sup>47</sup>

#### *The Roman Army and the Fortifications of Dura-Europos*

When the Romans took over the city of Dura-Europos in A.D. 165, it was an eastern defensive outpost of the empire, and the walls of the city, enclosing both soldiers and civilians, became, in effect, the walls of a Roman fortress. The army seems to have been concentrated in the north-west part of the city in a distinct “military quarter” (discussed in detail later in this chapter), but the whole wall circuit was defended in wartime. Arms and armor were excavated from the towers,<sup>48</sup> but these perhaps relate only to the end of Dura in wartime rather than to regular peacetime activity.

In time of external military threat, the gates of the city would have to be defended, but there is also evidence that parts of the city were policed by the army in peacetime on a day-to-day basis. Papyri dated ca. A.D. 240 detail parts of the city guarded by soldiers, specifically members of the auxiliary *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*.<sup>49</sup> These include the *porta praetoriana* (Praetorian gate), the *porta aquaria* (water gate), the *groma* (cross-roads, intersection), and the *horrea frumenti* (granary). The *porta praetoriana* probably was the gate near the headquarters building in block E7. The editors of the papyri suggest that the *porta aquaria* was a postern gate off the military quarter by tower 2. However, it might have been a gate by which the main street passed down to the Euphrates itself. No such gate survives, because this part of the city has eroded away and a large part of the city wall there has been destroyed. The *groma* clearly was an intersection somewhere, probably, as the editors suggest, the crossing of street 10 (the main street of the “military quarter”) and street F, near the *principia*, a crossing that seems to have had some architectural

47. Ammianus Marcellinus 23.5.8, 24.1.5.

48. *Dura* 4, 11, (sling balls and *lorica squamata* armor from tower 16); *Dura* 6, 439–66, (horse armor, leg armor, and a painted shield from tower 19).

49. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 376–83, nos. 106–10.

elaboration.<sup>50</sup> Alternatively it may have been a crossing over the main street of the town, further south. The *horrea* may have been military granaries or civic or private granaries elsewhere in the city. No granaries have been identified in the excavation of the city.

Evidence from the main desert gate on the west of the city, the so-called Palmyrene gate, provides vivid testimony of a military presence. The lower room of the north tower of this gate served as a guardroom. The excavators note the presence of weapons nearby<sup>51</sup> and, more importantly, large numbers of inscriptions, graffiti, and *dipinti*. Many survive to this day. Some, on the inner walls of the gate passage, refer to individuals with the titles *βενεφικιάριος τριβούνου* (*beneficiarius tribuni*)<sup>52</sup> and *στάτωρ τριβούνι* (*stator tribuni*).<sup>53</sup> Such titles referred to soldiers on detached service engaged in policing duties. Three small altars were found in a room adjacent to the gate, one bearing an inscription dating it to the reign of Commodus, naming a *decurio* of *cohors II equitata*. Another gives a date of A.D. 196 and shows a vexillum standard, a winged victory, and a soldier holding an eagle.<sup>54</sup> These pieces of evidence show that the army policed the main gate of Dura-Europos, and numerous graffiti and the spread of dates on two of the altars suggest that this was a regular procedure rather than an emergency wartime measure.

In the beginning of the Roman occupation of Dura, at least, civilian officials also served at the main gate. Inscriptions and graffiti mention two father-and-son pairs with Aramaic names who are variously described as *τελώνης*, *πυλουργός*, and *βουκόλος*.<sup>55</sup> The *τελώνης* clearly was a customs official who collected dues, and the *πυλουργός* was a gatekeeper.<sup>56</sup> The role of the *βουκόλος* is less clear, but noting Rostovtzeff's suggestion of a Dionysiac honorific title, the editor suggests that the *βουκόλος* rented public oxen for ploughing.<sup>57</sup> Alternatively he may have controlled grazing rights or movement of herds into the city to market.

50. Ibid., 378; cf. *Dura* 5, 206f.

51. *Dura* 1, 16–18 (a shield, arrows).

52. Ibid., 32–41, nos. R1–3, R6, R14, C8.

53. Ibid., 36–38, nos. R8a, R10, R11, R14.

54. Ibid., 42, no. 1 (cf. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 24 n. 5); *Dura* 1, 20–21.

55. *Dura* 2, 115–16, no. D3; 126–27, no. D41; 131, nos. D67, D69; 137, no. D100; 139, no. D103.

56. Ibid., 157–58 cites Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, 1.20 for the former and suggests that the *πυλουργός* was like “the satrap at the great gates” at Babylon who questioned incoming travelers in Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 1.27.

57. *Dura* 2, 158–59.

Pastoralism undoubtedly was an important economic activity on the adjacent steppe. One inscription bears the date (Seleucid era) of A.D. 164/5, showing that it dates to the very start of the Roman occupation. Another includes the word πώρτα, apparently a hellenized transliteration of the Latin *porta*, probably dating it to the Roman occupation.

### *The “Military Quarter”*

The northwestern part of Dura-Europos acquired a distinctly military character by the second decade of the third century A.D. It is not clear whether the army took over that area at the beginning of the Roman occupation or whether it was a later development resulting from an increased garrison. There is evidence of army presence in this “quarter” as early as A.D. 168—a dedication in the *mithraeum* by the commander of the Palmyrene archers who formed the first Roman garrison of the city.<sup>58</sup> However, most military buildings date to the reign of Caracalla or later, as do the conversions of civilian housing to military barracks.<sup>59</sup> A concentration of military buildings here suggests the existence of a distinct “military quarter,” as, perhaps, does part of a wall that the excavators claimed separated military from civilians.<sup>60</sup> This wall began at tower 21 and went east for four blocks, with a gate to allow a street to pass through. It was made of mud brick, 1.65 meters wide. A fragmentary and substantially erased *tabula ansata* inscription found in a barracks converted from housing in nearby block E8 has been linked to the construction of this wall.<sup>61</sup> The editors interpreted the fragments as an abbreviation of *pedes centum*, recording construction of a hundred paces of wall, and dated the inscription to A.D. 211/2 or A.D. 217. They also suggested that a fragment of rubble walling between blocks E4 and E3 delineated the eastern side of the camp, although this location would seem to exclude some clearly military buildings from the “military quarter.”<sup>62</sup> The mud-brick wall seems a more appropriate divider of civilian from military. However, even if there was formal separation of camp and city, it appears that the barrier was permeable, at least in one direction.

58. *Dura* 7/8, 83–84, no. 845.

59. The military buildings are dated by the excavators on the basis of inscriptions, the barrack conversions generally from structural relationships with epigraphically dated buildings.

60. *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 69.

61. R.N. Frye, J.F. Gilliam, H. Ingholt, and C.B. Welles, “Inscriptions from Dura-Europos,” *Yale Classical Studies* 14 (1955): 161–62, no. 59.

62. *Dura* 6, 30.

Within the “military quarter” was a variety of buildings used by the army. In block E7 lay what the excavators interpreted as headquarters of the commander of legionary forces in the city. They called it the *praetorium*, although, strictly, *praetorium* should refer to the commander’s house and *principia* to the headquarters. The interpretation is based on the characteristic plan and on inscriptions and graffiti referring to legionary vexillations.<sup>63</sup> A building inscription bore a dedication to Caracalla.<sup>64</sup> Parts of the Temple of Azzanathkona, in the same block, contained graffiti and papyrus rolls pertaining to *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, an auxiliary unit, and were interpreted by the excavators as the headquarters or archive of the auxiliary troops and perhaps an early headquarters for the whole garrison.<sup>65</sup> A house in block J1 behind the headquarters was interpreted as the residence of the legionary commander, on the basis of its position, similar to those of regular fortresses in northern Europe.<sup>66</sup> The “Palace of the *Dux Ripae*” is a large building in block X3/5, built around a series of courtyards with a terrace overlooking the Euphrates. It was dated to just after A.D. 220 by the excavators.<sup>67</sup> The excavations produced graffiti and papyri suggesting that it was the residence and headquarters of an otherwise unknown military official called the *dux ripae*. Gilliam suggested that this official was a military commander with the command of the eastern Euphrates frontier devolved from the governor of Syria Coele, in distant Antioch.<sup>68</sup>

Other facilities apparently used by the army existed in the “military quarter.” They included an amphitheater in F3, a training ground,<sup>69</sup> a Roman-type bath (E3), several temples (a *mithraeum* in J7, the Temple of the Palmyrene Gods/Bel in J3/5, the *dolicheneum* in X7, and the “military temple” in A1), and a large number of barrack buildings converted from civilian houses.

63. *Dura* 5, 205–18.

64. *Ibid.*, 218–21, no. 556.

65. *Ibid.*, 216–17, 295–303.

66. *Ibid.*, 235–37.

67. *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 94–96.

68. J.F. Gilliam, “The *Dux Ripae* at Dura,” *Transactions of the American Philological Society* 72 (1941): 157–75. Of course, the structure may have had other functions besides headquarters of the *dux ripae*. The name “Palace of the *Dux Ripae*” is not necessarily justified by the evidence for his activities there.

69. On the expansion of a *campus*, see *Dura* 2, 83–86, no. H1 (an inscription from the military temple). The editor suggests that the training ground was adjacent to the citadel west wall, southeast of the temple. See M.A. Speidel, “*Legio IIII Scythica*, its Movements and Men,” 179, no. 14.

Thus it is clear that one part of Dura-Europos was predominantly military in character and use in ca. A.D. 210–56. Were military and civilian parts of the city mutually exclusive, or were the notional barriers (like the mud-brick wall) permeable in one or both directions? Did soldiers use buildings in the “civilian” part of the city and vice versa?

This study is complicated by the limited precision of dates for the use of buildings in Dura. Evidence for civilian and military use of the same building may not necessarily relate to simultaneous activity by both groups. Nevertheless, cautious consideration of this evidence produces interesting and useful results.

### *Temples*

Evidence from temples at Dura-Europos suggests that some cults were patronized mostly by the military, others by civilians, a few by both. The so-called Temple of the Roman Archers, or “military temple,” in block A1 was built by members of *cohors II Ulpia equitata civium Romanorum sagittariorum*<sup>70</sup> and approximates to a simple rectangular Roman plan rather than the Babylonian court plan typical of Dura.<sup>71</sup> It was built by the army, lies close to the “military quarter,” and provides no evidence of civilian use. The *mithraeum* in block J7 also seems to have been predominantly or exclusively military in use. It lay within the “military quarter,” and at least the middle of three phases was built by soldiers.<sup>72</sup> The earliest datable dedication there was set up in A.D. 168 by the commander of the Palmyrene archers who formed the earliest Roman garrison of the city.<sup>73</sup> On the basis of the graffiti found there, the excavators suggest that the worshipers in the middle and later phases of the *mithraeum* were “mostly, if not exclusively, soldiers.”<sup>74</sup> Perhaps Palmyrene soldiers shared the early phase with civilians, but there is no evidence of this. The site of the *mithraeum* contained a sanctuary in the Parthian period, so there was some continuity of its sacred nature from civilian to military use.<sup>75</sup> However, it is difficult to see the *mithraeum* as other than

70. See *Dura* 2, 16–17; 83–86, no. H1.

71. S.B. Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture* (1988), 124.

72. *Dura* 7/8, 85–87, no. 847 is a Latin building inscription of A.D. 209–11, indicating that the structure was built by vexillations of *legio IIII Scythica* and *legio XVI Flavia Firma*.

73. *Dura* 7/8, 83–84, no. 845 (in Greek and Palmyrene).

74. *Ibid.*, 122.

75. *Dura* 7/8, 129, no. 868 records the restoration of temple doors after the Roman attack of A.D. 116/17. It was found under remains of the first *mithraeum* and probably came from that area.

a military sanctuary. The inscriptions and the character of the cult itself (discussed in chap. 4) suggest that the *dolicheneum* (X7) was used exclusively by the Dura garrison, despite its Mesopotamian-style courtyard plan.<sup>76</sup>

Temples that provide evidence solely of civilian use include the Temple of Zeus Megistos (C4), the Temple of Artemis (H4), the Temple of Atargatis (H2), the Temple of Aphlad (N8), and the Temple of Adonis (L5). The Temple of Zeus Kyrios (M8/N7) also seems to have contained a civilian cult, despite excavators' initial speculations to the contrary.<sup>77</sup>

Temples providing some evidence of civilian and military use are the Temple of the Gaddé (H1), the Temple of Azzanathkona (E7), and the Temple of Bel (otherwise known as the Temple of the Palmyrene Gods, in J3/5). The Temple of the Gaddé, in the "civilian" part of the city, contained a mural of a god in military dress, dedications by Palmyrene soldiers, and a mixture of Greek and Palmyrene graffiti and inscriptions.<sup>78</sup> The Temple of Azzanathkona consisted of a series of rooms around a court.<sup>79</sup> Some were built before the Roman occupation, and an inscription of A.D. 161 refers to the eponymous goddess,<sup>80</sup> but it is not clear whether civilians continued to worship there when parts were taken over as a military records office. It stood well within the "military quarter." Evidence from the complex multiphase Temple of Bel also shows civilian and military use.<sup>81</sup> It was built and used as a temple before the Roman occupation of Dura-Europos but lay within the "military quarter" of the city in the third century A.D. Evidence for military use includes the dramatic painted representation of a sacrifice by the tribune of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, an altar dedicated to Zeus Betylos by a soldier of *legio IIII Scythica*,<sup>82</sup> and a variety of military titles as graffiti. Another painting has no military connections. It shows a sacrifice by an individual named as the eunuch Otes and a *bouleutes* (councillor).<sup>83</sup> Stylistically this

76. See Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture*, 122.

77. *Dura* 7/8, 284–92; cf. Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture*, 102.

78. *Dura* 7/8, 258–72, pls. xxvi–xxvii; 277, no. 906 (*cohors XX Palmyrenorum*); 279, no. 909 (the pre-Roman garrison of Palmyrene archers).

79. This temple is discussed most clearly in Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture*, 99–100.

80. *Dura* 5, 142–45, no. 453.

81. See Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture*, 105–10.

82. Cumont, *Fouilles*, 89–114, table VI; *ibid.*, 363, nos. 8a–b; *Dura* 4, 68–71, no. 168.

83. Cumont, *Fouilles*, 122–34, pls. LV–LVII; 364–65, inscriptions 9a and 9c. Also see A. Perkins, *The Art of Dura-Europos* (1973), 47.

resembled the tribune's sacrifice scene and may be contemporary. If so, the temple was used by soldiers and civilians simultaneously, and civilians were allowed into the "military quarter." However, evidence from the other temples in Dura-Europos suggests that military and civilian places of worship were separate. The evidence of adherence to specific cults is discussed in chapter 4.

### *Places of Entertainment*

Places of entertainment in Dura-Europos included the amphitheater, bath buildings, and a possible brothel. The amphitheater (block F3) was a small structure that probably seated no more than one thousand.<sup>84</sup> An inscription shows it was built by vexillations of *legiones IIII Scythica* and *III Cyrenaica* in A.D. 216.<sup>85</sup> Probably it was built exclusively for military use.<sup>86</sup> It contrasts with other amphitheaters in the east, such as the one at Bostra in Arabia, which is large enough for public as well as military use.<sup>87</sup> A picture scratched on the wall of a house outside the military quarter of Dura shows a pair of gladiators fighting, but a graffito in the same house shows it was occupied by soldiers, so the picture is not evidence for civilian attendance at spectacles.<sup>88</sup>

The bath buildings of particular note are the "Roman Baths" in blocks E3, M7, and C3—the first within the military quarter, the last two well outside it. These form a distinct group because of their homogeneity of plan, materials, and construction and because of their departure from the usual mud-brick architecture of Dura-Europos.<sup>89</sup> Each consisted of a nucleus of five rooms built of baked brick of single and *bipedalis* size, with vaulted roofs constructed in concrete. They had under-floor heating systems and uniform water piping and provide the only evidence of sophisticated hydraulic engineering from the whole city. The excavators suggest that these bath buildings provide evidence of "the intensive Romanization of municipal life characteristic of the city's last half century."<sup>90</sup> But it

84. *Dura* 6, 68–80, pl. iii.

85. *Ibid.*, 77–80, no. 630.

86. *Ibid.*, 76.

87. R. Al Moudad, P. Blanc, and J. Dentzer ("Un Amphithéâtre à Bostra," *Syria* 67 [1990]: 201–4) report a stone structure ca. 100 meters west of the theater, with an estimated long axis of 120 meters.

88. *Dura* 5, 38–39, pl. xxxiii, no. 3, house C in block C7; *Dura* 5, 39–40, no. 401.

89. *Dura* 6, 84–105, pl. iv includes a description of the Roman bath buildings and a comparative discussion of the baths in the city.

90. *Dura* 6, 104.

seems more likely that these baths were built by and for the army. Their homogeneity and alien construction suggest they were built by a single, external agency. They were built when the garrison of Dura was expanding, in locations where soldiers were stationed. The E3 bath lay within the military quarter. The M7 bath was near the garrisoned main gate, and the C3 bath was close to the probable location of the corresponding gate facing the Euphrates, perhaps the *porta aquaria* where, according to papyri, soldiers were stationed. The small size of these baths suggests that they were used exclusively by soldiers rather than by the population as a whole.

The earlier F3 bath was interpreted by the excavators as a civilian structure of the Parthian period, constructed by the third quarter of the first century A.D.<sup>91</sup> However, this dating is unlikely. The under-floor heating system, the extensive use of Roman-style flat baked bricks, and the use of concrete vaulting and vaulting tubes are all alien to Parthian architecture and are more likely a product of direct Roman influence. Frank Brown's unpublished notes on the phasing of construction in this part of Dura show a great degree of uncertainty about how these baths fitted into the sequence.<sup>92</sup> Brown himself considered the possibility of a sequence setting the F3 bath later than that published, and it is likely that it was built by and to serve the earliest Roman garrison of Dura. It went out of use before A.D. 216 when part of its structure was incorporated into the amphitheater. The figure of Victory that decorated the building, painted on the first coat of plaster over the stone, seems appropriate to military use.<sup>93</sup>

Finally, a fifth bath, not fully excavated, lay next to the "Palace of the *Dux Ripae*," again emphasizing the link between bathing and Roman authority.<sup>94</sup> Thus there is no evidence for civilian use of Roman-style bathing facilities at Dura.

The final "place of entertainment" to be considered is a house, in block G5, in the "civilian" part of the city. It was apparently a brothel and/or guild center for prostitutes and entertainers, with a connection with the army.<sup>95</sup> It was identified on the basis of *dipinto* records on the

91. Ibid., 77.

92. I am grateful to Dr. Susan Matheson of Yale University Art Gallery for allowing me access to this material.

93. *Dura* 6, 63–67 and pl. xli, no. 1.

94. See *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 25–26.

95. *Dura* 9, pt. 1, 166–67; app. II, 203–65.

walls, dating to the last years of Roman occupation of Dura. They list women, some of them clearly prostitutes, along with a variety of male and female entertainers. The excavators suggest that this was a guild headquarters with accommodation for traveling members rather than their place of work, although this distinction may be too subtle.<sup>96</sup> An *optio* is mentioned in the texts, suggesting that the army was involved, as does a reference to a *σταθμοῦχος*, probably a military billeting official. The editors suggest that the entertainers served the needs of the army, which provided their accommodation.<sup>97</sup> This hypothesis may be supported by the fact that there are references in the texts to travel to and from Zeugma.<sup>98</sup> As the editors note, Zeugma was an important crossing place for the Euphrates and an embarkation point for river transport. Thus it was logical that traveling entertainers came from there. However, the fact that Zeugma itself was also a military base strengthens their suggestion of army involvement.<sup>99</sup> That most of the entertainers were itinerant rather than local emphasizes the separation of army and civilian population of Dura. Indeed, I argue in chapter 5 that it was an army-run brothel, staffed in part by army-owned slaves.

### *Housing*

Troops garrisoned in Dura-Europos required living quarters. Most began as standard Durene houses of courtyard plan. They were converted to military use with a greater or lesser degree of modification. Some lay within the “military quarter,” around the headquarters buildings, producing a rather irregular camp, unusual by western standards in making use of existing buildings rather than being entirely built for a military purpose. The best example of conversion of civilian housing is a house in block E4.<sup>100</sup> This was heavily remodeled, with doorways blocked, new ones cut, and modifications to partition walls. The excavators suggest that the remodeled house provided accommodation for a century of the

96. Ibid., 259.

97. The *optio* is mentioned at *Dura* 9, pt. 1, 218, frag. V, col. 3, line 9; the *σταθμοῦχος* at ibid., 215, frag. I, col. 8?, line 3. For the editors’ interpretation, see ibid., 260–61.

98. Ibid., 258, frags. I–IV.

99. Its importance as a fortress and military base by the third century is debated. See Kennedy, *The Twin Towns of Zeugma*, 54, suggesting that part or all of *III Scythica* moved in the late second century A.D., and M.A. Speidel “*Legio III Scythica*, its Movements and Men,” 174–75, emphasizing its continued importance to A.D. 252, with a continued legionary presence.

100. See *Dura* 6, 19–48, pl. II.

*cohors Ulpia equitata* in the second century A.D. Military equipment were found in the rooms, and soldiers' graffiti—mostly Greek, some Latin—were found on the walls. Other houses within the “military quarter” were converted to barracks, including some in blocks J7 and E8.<sup>101</sup>

However, “civilian” parts of the city also contained houses used for lodging members of the garrison. A clear example is the “House of the Roman Scribes,” house A in block L7.<sup>102</sup> This was a standard Parthian house rebuilt and redecorated with wall and ceiling paintings. These include portraits of men named as Ἡλιόδωρος ἀκτουάρις and Οὐλπίος Σιλουανὸς τεσσεράρις, an *actuarius* and a *tesserarius*, junior officers.<sup>103</sup> There were portraits of other men with Greek or Aramaic names written in Greek letters, but no military titles. The excavators suggest that the soldiers were administrators at the nearby main city gate, billeted on the owners of the house (the men with the Greek and Aramaic names), or that all the individuals depicted were involved with administration of the gate.<sup>104</sup> Block M8 had houses with graffiti referring to *legio IIII Scythica* and, in Latin and Greek, to men called Rufinianus and Basilianus.<sup>105</sup> One graffito mentions Δημίας and his brother, described as οτ(α)θμοῦ[χοι], perhaps owners of the billet inhabited by the soldiers with Latin names, or perhaps billeted soldiers.<sup>106</sup> House C in block C7 contained a graffito dedication in Greek by Οὐαλεντίνος and Κάκκις, described as κοντοβερνάριοι, (*contubernales*, “tentmates”), along with a scratched picture of a gladiator and a temple.<sup>107</sup> Likewise a house in block L5 seems to have been occupied by soldiers for part of its history.<sup>108</sup> House H in block G7 produced the tombstone of Julius Terentius, tribune of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*; the excavators suggest that it may have been his house.<sup>109</sup>

None of these houses showed as much evidence of rebuilding for military use as the E4 house. The decorative scheme in the “House of the Roman Scribes” was quite elaborate and implies a long-term presence.

101. These barracks are marked on the revised plan in *Dura* 7 but are not published.

102. See *Dura* 6, 265–308, pls. X–XI.

103. *Ibid.*, 291–93, nos. 1 and 2.

104. *Ibid.*, 301–2.

105. *Ibid.*, 178, no. 697; 176–78, nos. 695–96.

106. *Ibid.*, 177.

107. *Dura* 5, 38–40, no. 401.

108. See *Dura* 7/8, 177; a gypsum stamp has a Latin name on it, and a depiction of a soldier with a military standard is scratched in the plaster of another room.

109. *Dura* 9, pt. 1, 176–85, no. 939.

There may be a contrast between housing taken over by the army for long-term use in the “military quarter” and overflow accommodation used by the army temporarily for individuals and units not permanently based in the city.<sup>110</sup> The legal and historical evidence for such billeting arrangements is discussed in chapter 3. The size of the camp area is difficult to define due to poor survival (and uncertain identification) of the camp wall, but it seems to have been about eight to twelve hectares.<sup>111</sup> This is small for a legionary fortress but large for a fort containing a milliary cohort like *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, the core of the later garrison of Dura.<sup>112</sup> Perhaps housing in the “civilian” part of the city was used when the garrison was augmented, for example, with legionary vexillations.

The families of soldiers perhaps lived in the civilian part of the city. One document attests to the presence of soldiers’ families in Dura. It is a papyrus of A.D. 254 formalizing the divorce of a soldier of *legio IIII Scythica* from Aurelia Amimma, described as “Durene.”<sup>113</sup> As a native of Dura, she probably lived there throughout her married life.

#### *Conclusions regarding Dura-Europos*

Like most legionary fortresses of Syria, Dura-Europos was a city with Seleucid military origins. Perhaps unlike such legionary bases as Zeugma and Apamea, part of Dura was taken over by the army, apparently separated from the rest of the city by a wall, and modified to suit military requirements. The evidence from Dura enables us to be more specific about the spatial interaction of military and civilian populations than elsewhere and to consider the “permeability” of physical division between military and civilians and hence, perhaps, the degree of separation between them. The whole city, rather than just the “military quarter,” was defended, and troops controlled the main gate of the city, albeit in conjunction with civilian officials for part of its history. The civilian part of the city also was used for military housing on at least an occasional basis. Baths and the “brothel” situated in the civilian part of Dura were used by the army. Temples provide some evidence of overlap, but most were separate. Overall there seems to have been potential for quite a lot

110. See *Dura* 6, 301.

111. See Kennedy and Riley, *Rome’s Desert Frontier*, 113, fig. 61.

112. Kennedy and Riley (*Rome’s Desert Frontier*, 123) note that the fortress of Bostra had an area of 15.8 hectares and Signara ca. 17 hectares. These are the only clearly defined eastern legionary fortresses of the second to early third century. Others are later and smaller, apparently to accommodate smaller legions of that period.

113. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 166–69, no. 32.

of physical intermingling of soldiers and civilians. However, archaeological evidence does not really show the character of this mixing, and the key question, addressed in parts 2 and 3 of this study, is whether physical proximity equated to close social, cultural, and economic relationships.

Dura-Europos is the best documented Roman military site on the middle Euphrates, but several sites further east have been investigated. Indeed, nominal Roman control seems to have extended as far downriver as Mesene in the mid-second century A.D.<sup>114</sup> Roman outposts alongside the Euphrates have been located and investigated in recent fieldwork associated with dam construction in Iraq; most were suited to controlling travel along the river and its valley.<sup>115</sup> Outposting of auxiliary detachments from Dura to smaller garrisons in the region is attested in papyri. Bijan may have been one such outpost. It seems to have been the site of a civilian settlement in the Parthian period, but the island on which it lay appears too small to have accommodated a significant civilian settlement alongside the garrison that was installed, probably, by the early third century A.D.<sup>116</sup> Ana, which lay on Qal'a Island in the Euphrates, was another middle Euphrates garrison post. It was a Parthian civilian settlement with a garrison of Palmyrene troops in periods of both Parthian and Roman control, the latter in the second and perhaps early third century A.D.<sup>117</sup> Rather larger than Bijan and Ana, Kifrin (fig. 7) resembles Dura-Europos more closely in its topography (although it is smaller than Dura), with a "citadel" and "town" area within the same wall circuit but

114. See Potter, "The Inscriptions of the Bronze Herakles from Mesene."

115. Isaac (*Limits*, 150) suggests that Kifrin had such a role rather than being part of a more traditional frontier system.

116. See M. Gawlikowski, "Bigan Island," *AFO* 29 (1983): 207, and "Bijan in the Euphrates," *Sumer* 42 (1985), 15–21; M. Krogulska, "Baigan," *AFO* 34 (1987): 155–56. The site is an island in the Euphrates with two phases of fortifications, the latter and larger covering ca. 1.5 hectares. If Gawlikowski is correct in identifying Bijan as the νηρόπολις (island city) Izan mentioned by Isidore of Charax in the first century A.D., it appears to have been a civilian settlement under the Parthians. The Roman-period settlement seems to have been military and Palmyrene, the most likely explanation for the rooms and storage magazines excavated and for the small finds including Latin and Palmyrene ostraca, arrowheads, and brittle ware pottery found primarily on sites under Roman control. Coins, pottery, and lamps suggest a floruit of Roman occupation in the early third century. It seems unlikely that civilian and military populations of any substantial size could have coexisted on such a small island. Krogulska's reference to a "new urban complex" in a second Roman phase seems hyperbole given the size of the site. In a later article ("Bijan-Lamps from the 'Roman' Layer," *Mesopotamia* 22 [1987]: 100), she refers to Bijan as "a small military post."

117. See A. Northedge, A. Bamber, and M. Roaf, *Excavations at Ana, Qal'a Island* (1988); the evidence from the site is discussed in more detail in app. A.

separated from one another. The excavators suggest Kifrin was a fortress of Severan origin, but its similarity to Dura suggests it was another mixed military/civilian site.<sup>118</sup>

### Northern Mesopotamia in the Severan Period

While second-century and early third-century penetration of the middle Euphrates by the Romans is known principally from scattered archaeological evidence, the Roman presence in northern Mesopotamia between Lucius Verus' war of A.D. 165 and the Sassanian conquests of the mid-third century A.D. is documented, albeit still imperfectly, by such historical authors as Cassius Dio and Herodian, in the *Historia Augusta*, and by epigraphic and archaeological material.

The existence of Roman garrisons in that area in the later second century A.D. is clear from Cassius Dio's account of A.D. 194–95, when the Osrhoeni and Abiadenei revolted, ostensibly in support of Septimius Severus against Pescennius Niger. They besieged Nisibis, which had a Roman garrison of some sort, and demanded the removal of garrisons from their territory.<sup>119</sup>

Three cities in Roman Mesopotamia, Nisibis, Singara, and Rhesaina, may have served as bases for the *legiones I* and *III Parthicae* that Septimius Severus raised to garrison the new province.<sup>120</sup> All seem to have been substantial pre-Roman settlements. Nisibis was Seleucid Antioch in Mygdonia, Rhesaina has Hellenistic remains, and literary evidence suggests a settlement of some significance at Singara in the time of Pliny the Elder and Trajan's eastern wars.<sup>121</sup> All received colonial titles in the Severan period, and this enhancement of status may relate to their military importance and association with the legions. As in Syria, the Roman legionary bases seem to have been located at existing urban centers in the new province rather than acting as catalysts for new urban development.

118. See A. Invernizzi, "Kifrin," *AFO* 29 (1983): 207–9 and *AFO* 34 (1987): 156–66; "Researches in Kifrin: 'Al Qadissiya Dam Project,'" *Sumer* 42 (1985): 22–26; "Kifrin and the Euphrates *Limes*"; "Kifrin-Βηχουφρεϊν." See also Valtz, "Kifrin, the 'Limes' Fortress," in *The Land between Two Rivers* (1985), 111–20. The evidence from the site is discussed in more detail in app. A.

119. Cassius Dio 75.1.1–3.

120. Kennedy, in "The Garrisoning of Mesopotamia in the Late Antonine and Early Severan Period," suggests *I Parthica* at Singara, *III Parthica* perhaps at Nisibis, and no legion at Rhesaina. See also Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*, 125–31.

121. The evidence for all these sites is discussed in detail in app. A.

However, the elevation of communities that probably were not technically *poleis* (Rhesaina, Singara) to civic status and of all three to *coloniae* is an interesting development that prefigures the foundation of late Roman fortress cities in the region.

There is no clear evidence for the locations of Severan legionary fortresses at these sites or for their positions relative to the civilian settlements. Late Roman fortifications surround the cities of Rhesaina and Singara, representing the fortress-city combinations typical of that later period. It is not certain whether the Severan legions were based inside the cities and their walls like later garrisons or had separate camps outside the cities.

The independent Arab city of Hatra was besieged by the Romans on three occasions in A.D. 117 and 199–200. However, three Latin inscriptions from a temple in that city suggest that Roman auxiliary troops may have been based there and may have helped to defend it as allies against the Sassanian Persians shortly before its capture by the latter in A.D. 240/1.<sup>122</sup> These troops may have been based in the city itself, which was defended by several substantial wall circuits.

#### Administrative and Logistical Support of the Eastern Frontier: Antioch ad Orontem and Seleucia Pieria to the Sassanian Wars

The sites examined so far were either long-term bases for military units, particularly for legions, set back from the actual frontier, or frontier posts that troops might have had to defend against enemy attack. Antioch and Seleucia Pieria do not fit into these categories. Antioch may have been a military base in the republican period; it succumbed to direct Persian attack in A.D. 252. Seleucia Pieria (fig. 8) functioned as a naval base against pirates on the Syrian and Cilician coasts.<sup>123</sup> But for the most part they were not in the front line, and their association with the military was administrative and logistical. Nevertheless, there is evidence that military personnel were prominent in those cities.<sup>124</sup> Antioch was the base of the

122. D. Oates, "A Note on Three Latin Inscriptions from Hatra," *Sumer* 11 (1955): 39–43. The evidence for a Roman military presence is discussed in app. A. For the defenses, see M. Gawlikowski, "A Fortress in Mesopotamia: Hatra," in *The Roman and Byzantine Army in the East*, ed. E. Dabrowa (1994), 47–56.

123. For Antioch as a republican legionary base, see Cicero *Ad Att.* 5.18.1 (in 51 B.C.); *Ad Fam.* 12.15.7 (in 43 B.C.).

124. See Isaac, *Limits*, 436–38. Wheeler ("The Laxity of Syrian Legions") doubts the size of the military presence there before the fourth century A.D. but tends to overemphasize the value of negative evidence.

governor of the province of Syria, who doubled as military commander of Syria in the Principate. Emperors and senior commanders generally set out from Antioch for wars on the eastern frontiers, and as the port of Antioch, Seleucia Pieria also played an important role in supporting troops on the eastern frontier. From the second century A.D. at least, major wars against the Persians required legionary expeditionary forces (such as *II Parthica*) brought it from other parts of the empire. While other routes were used, Seleucia Pieria was an obvious place to disembark troops to march overland to the frontier.<sup>125</sup> If supplies for the army had to be brought in by sea, Seleucia Pieria was a good place to do so, because the Orontes was navigable to Gephyra, east of Antioch, and from Gephyra to the Euphrates there were established road routes, such as that to Zeugma.<sup>126</sup> The evidence for naval units performing logistical duties at Seleucia is examined in detail in chapter 5 and appendix A.

Thus Antioch and Seleucia Pieria played a distinctive support role for activity on the eastern frontier of the empire. The considerable evidence for military personnel in these cities in the Principate is examined in appendix A.

#### Roman Colonization in Syria and Mesopotamia from Augustus to the Third Century

Settlement of legionary veterans in communities given the status of *coloniae* was common throughout the Roman empire early in the Principate. Such *coloniae* were established in diverse locations, from Britain to south-east Asia Minor, but were relatively homogeneous in culture and political institutions. Often their military associations ran deeper than just the origins of their settlers. At Timgad in Numidia and Glevum in Britain, to cite just two examples, the urban structures of the *coloniae* seem to have evolved directly from the legionary fortresses that preceded them.<sup>127</sup> In other instances *coloniae* were founded on virgin sites or on the sites of relatively minor pre-Roman settlements. This situation was typical of the Augustan *coloniae* of Pisidia, relatively close to Syria.<sup>128</sup> Clearly it is impor-

125. Balty ("Apamée (1986)," 219) mentions an inscription (AE 1993, 1572) from Apamea indicating that *legio II Parthica* had landed at Aegeae in Cilicia in A.D. 215 and marched overland to Antioch.

126. See van Berchem, "Le Port de Séleucie," 47–50, 65f.

127. On Timgad, see Fentress, *Numidia and the Roman Army*, 126–32; on Glevum, H. Hurst, "Gloucester (Glevum)," in *Fortress into City*, ed. G. Webster (1988), 48–73.

128. See B. Levick, *Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor* (1967), 42–55.

tant to see whether such veteran colonization played a part in the development of the urban structure of Roman Syria and Mesopotamia and what cultural impact it had on indigenous populations of the region.

One clear example of a veteran *colonia* in Syria is *Colonia Julia Augusta Felix Berytrus*, modern Beirut.<sup>129</sup> Strabo records that two legions were settled there by Agrippa, presumably when he was in Syria in 15/14 B.C., and subsequent coins of the city with legionary eagles and numbers show they were *V Macedonica* and *VIII Augusta*.<sup>130</sup> The colony was founded on a site already occupied by a Phoenician and Hellenistic city.<sup>131</sup> Current archaeological work suggests general continuity of plans and alignments of buildings between the Hellenistic and Roman periods in some parts of Beirut, contradicting speculations regarding major changes by earlier scholars.<sup>132</sup> However, preliminary study of pottery of the early Roman period from recent excavation suggests significant “romanization” of this aspect of the material culture, with import of Arretine, Pompeian Red Ware, and Italian thin-walled wares and with imitation of Arretine forms in Eastern Sigillata and of Italian *orlo bifido* casseroles in local fabrics.<sup>133</sup> There is little evidence of the fate of previous inhabitants. Millar suggests they were incorporated into the *colonia*, preserving a substratum of Greek and Phoenician culture.<sup>134</sup>

Whatever the fate of the Greco-Macedonian and Phoenician populations of Berytus, it is clear that veteran settlement had a significant cultural impact on the city. New Roman political institutions show a break

129. Recent discussions of the Roman colony at Berytus include Millar, “The Roman *Coloniae* of the Near East,” in *Roman Eastern Policy and Other Studies in Roman History*, ed. H. Solin and M. Kajava (1990), 10–23 (this is an earlier but fuller discussion of the *coloniae* than that in the same author’s *Roman Near East*, 143–44, 147, 279); and Isaac, *Limits*, 318–21. Also of value as a general survey of historical and archaeological evidence from Berytus is R. Mouterde, “Regards sur Beyrouth phénicienne, hellénistique et romaine,” *MUSJ* 40 (1964): 149–89.

130. Strabo 16.2.19; For the coins, cf. A. Burnett, M. Amandry, and P. Ripollès, *Roman Provincial Coinage*, vol. 1, *From the Death of Caesar to the Death of Vitellius* (44 B.C.–A.D. 69) (1992) (hereafter cited as *Roman Provincial Coinage* I), 650–61, especially no. 4547, a Claudian bronze coin of Berytus with two *aquilae* and the numerals V and VIII.

131. Mouterde, in “Regards sur Beyrouth,” 149–62, provides a summary of the evidence.

132. K. Butcher and R. Thorpe, “A Note on Excavations in Central Beirut, 1994–96,” *JRA* 10 (1997): 291–92, 299, 305. Mouterde (“Regards sur Beyrouth,” 164–65) suggested that a major reorganization did take place, but his account is largely speculative.

133. J. Evans, “Islamic and Roman Pottery: Preliminary Report,” 1995. ([http://www.aub.edu.lb/aub-online/faculties/arts\\_and\\_sciences/archaeology/pottery.html](http://www.aub.edu.lb/aub-online/faculties/arts_and_sciences/archaeology/pottery.html)) (1999).

134. Millar, “The Roman *Coloniae*,” 17.

with the past, as do the almost exclusive use of Latin in public inscriptions and coins, dedications to Italian cults, and development of a Latin intellectual life in the city, including local schools of Roman law.<sup>135</sup> Such penetration of Latin is unknown elsewhere in Syria and undoubtedly was the direct result of settlement of Italian veterans. The concentration of Roman citizens in the city and their military origins meant that Berytus was an important recruiting ground for the eastern legions in the first centuries of the Principate. However, despite the importance of Latin and Italian elements in the culture of the *colonia*, Greek and Phoenician elements remained: private dedications were in Greek as well as Latin, and cults of possible Syro-Phoenician origin were celebrated in the city.<sup>136</sup> Hence there was some cultural fusion of Latin, Greek, and Phoenician, but the character of the *colonia* was unique and heavily determined by the origins of the military settlers.

The other documented veteran colony in Syria is that of Ptolemais in the south of the province, on the border with Judaea. It was founded in the reign of Claudius, ca. A.D. 53, with veterans of four legions.<sup>137</sup> Like Berytus, it was a city (Acco, Ἀκκῆ, renamed Ptolemais in the Hellenistic period) long before the Roman settlement, but we know very little about the impact of the colony on the topography of the site. Applebaum has suggested a major reorganization of its territory, based on the appearance of Latin terms like *pagus* and *vicus* in inscriptions.<sup>138</sup> However, there is little clear evidence for the political relationship between the original population and the colonists or for the cultural impact of the colony. Its importance for the security of the region (and hence, perhaps, the allegiance of its population to central authority) is shown by the construction of a road from Antioch to Ptolemais in A.D. 56 and by its service as a base for Vespasian's army in the first Jewish revolt.<sup>139</sup>

135. See *ibid.*, 14–17.

136. See *ibid.*, 17–18.

137. Pliny (NH 5.75), writes *Colonia Claudii Caesaris Ptolemais, quae quondam Accae*. . . . In general, see Isaac, *Limits*, 110, 322–23; Millar, *Roman Near East*, 65, 267–70; *idem*, “The Roman *Coloniae*”; E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, revised and edited by G. Vermes and F. Millar (1973), 2:121–25. For the coins, see L. Kadman, *The Coins of Akko Ptolemais* (1961), 110–11, nos. 92–96, pl. vi. He reads the (extremely faint) numbers of the legions on the coins as III, V, X, and XII, although VI would make more sense than V at this time if they represent the legions of the Syrian garrison.

138. S. Applebaum, “The Roman Colony of Ptolemais-Ake and Its Territory,” in *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times* (1989), 70–72, 75.

139. For the road, see R. Mouterde, “La Voie romaine d’Antioche à Ptolemais,” *MUSJ* 2 (1907): 339; R.G. Goodchild, “The Coast Road of Phoenicia and Its Roman Milestones,”

The use of the term *colonia* in the region is not found subsequently until the Severan period. At this time it was an honorific status, not accompanied by wholesale settlement of new citizens, veterans or otherwise. In the first half of the third century A.D., a number of cities in Syria and Mesopotamia used the title *colonia*. These included Heliopolis (Baalbek), Tyre, Sidon, Emesa, Damascus, Palmyra, Dura-Europos, Carrhae, Edessa, Rhesaina, Nisibis, and Singara. Millar shows that there was little cultural “romanization” of these colonies except at Heliopolis, which developed within the territory of Berytus.<sup>140</sup> Some of these cities (Palmyra, Dura, Rhesaina, Nisibis) have provided evidence of military garrisons. Others, which lack clear evidence of troops, issued coins with military standards (generally vexilla) and the numbers of local legions at the same time as they advertised their colonial titles.<sup>141</sup> Thus there does seem to be a loose connection between these sites, colonial status, and the army, although its nature is unclear. In some cases the coins may refer to the presence of a legion, a vexillation, intensive recruitment on the city, or settlement of veterans.<sup>142</sup>

There is no evidence of veterans settled en masse in veteran colonies anywhere in the Roman empire after the reign of Hadrian, but by the reign of Severus Alexander it was common for plots of land in frontier regions to be assigned to veterans, apparently on condition that their sons served.<sup>143</sup> Land around some Severan *coloniae* in Mesopotamia was recently conquered and marginal to the Roman empire, and the expansion of the eastern armies from the Severan period suggests that some of this land was assigned to veterans. There is little clear evidence of this process, but one papyrus from Dura-Europos shows a veteran of *cohors III Augusta Thracum* purchasing (rather than being assigned) a vineyard somewhere

*Berytus* 9 (1948–49): 91–127, A(i) and pl. xxi.2. For Ptolemais as a base, see Josephus *BJ* 3.64–69.

140. Millar, “The Roman *Coloniae*,” 31–58.

141. For evidence of *legio VI Ferrata* at Damascus, see British Museum, Department of Coins and Medals, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Galatia, Cappadocia, and Syria*, ed. W. Wroth (1899), 286, no. 25; for *legio III Gallica* there, see Isaac, *Limits*, 139. For *legio III Gallica* at Sidon, see British Museum, Department of Coins and Medals, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Phoenicia*, ed. G.F. Hill (1910), cxi–cxii (also read as *III Parthica*). For Tyre, see *ibid.*, 269, nos. 367, 368, 369; 270, no. 371; 271, no. 376; 272, no. 380; 274, nos. 394–95. For Rhesaina, see K.O. Castelin, *The Coinage of Rhesaena in Mesopotamia* (1946), 20, no. 17, pl. III; 38, no. 43, pl. V; 88–89, issue d., pl. X. For Carrhae, see G.F. Hill, “The Mints of Roman Arabia and Mesopotamia,” *JRS* 6 (1916): 152–54.

142. Isaac (*Limits*, 139) suggests vexillations.

143. See J.C. Mann, *Legionary Recruitment and Veteran Settlement during the Principate* (1983), 65–67. Cf. *HA*, V. *Sev. Alex.* 58.4–5; *Digest* 21.2.11 (Paul *Responsorum* vi).

near the junction of the Khabur and the Euphrates, upstream from Dura, in A.D. 227, to go with land he already owned in that area.<sup>144</sup>

In general, colonization in Syria and Mesopotamia did not have a profound impact on the urbanization of those provinces. The large-scale veteran settlement at Berytus does seem to have had a significant impact on the city and its hinterland, but its uniqueness restricted the impact of foreign veterans on Syria in the Principate to that city and its territory. It is also interesting to note that at Berytus and Ptolemais the Romans settled veterans in existing cities and perhaps incorporated the inhabitants into the colony, a procedure analogous to their placing of legionary bases close to existing cities elsewhere in Syria.

Some of the *coloniae* of Syria and Mesopotamia in the first half of the third century A.D. may have had military associations. In some cases, such as those of Tyre, Sidon, and Damascus, the enhanced status may have derived from the stationing of a legionary vexillation in the city. This procedure prefigures the development of some fortress cities of the later empire, when the development of a site for military purposes often involved an enhancement of status (discussed in chap. 2), from village to city or even to metropolis. In other cases, enhancement of status may have been the result of troop deployments, recruitment, or veteran settlement in the city. The economic and social implications of veteran settlement are discussed in later chapters. However, the third-century *coloniae* were existing cities and do not show any signs of major change. Certainly they did not develop the distinctive Latin culture that characterized Berytus.

#### Summary: From Augustus to the Mid-Third Century

The Roman army in Syria and Mesopotamia had a unique relationship with the cities of those provinces up to at least the mid-third century A.D. Unlike in western provinces, where military bases were newly built in areas lacking concentrated civilian occupation and often served as a stimulus to urban growth, in the east, troops generally were based at existing cities. Very few firmly datable military sites of this period are not of urban form.<sup>145</sup> Problems of survival of evidence play a role in this

144. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 134–41, no. 26. Other papyri show that veterans were present in and around Dura at the same time, but without any specific reference to landownership (e.g., *ibid.*, 153–59, no. 30, line 36; 160–66, no. 31, line 56).

145. The first-century A.D. fort at Tell el-Hajj (see Bridel et al., *Tell el-Hajj in Syrien*), is one obvious exception. In addition, J. Lander, in *Roman Stone Fortifications* (1984), lists

picture. Cities tend to be the location of archaeological fieldwork, and the fact that most evidence examined is epigraphic reinforces that bias. The few permanent legionary fortress cities investigated contained greater concentrations of inscriptions than did dispersed rural sites, which were more likely to be occupied by auxiliary units and on a more temporary basis. Hence the former are better represented in epigraphic *corpora*, often the only evidence available for areas that have not seen intensive archaeological survey or excavation. However, as noted by Isaac, desert sites tend to survive better, and where survey work is done, they tend to be noticed.<sup>146</sup> Likewise, Gregory suggests that the deployment of the army in urban centers explains the few forts of traditional plan located in the region.<sup>147</sup> Hence, despite the biases of our evidence, our image of an army largely based in cities in the early and middle empire is likely to be valid.

The use of existing cities as military bases meant that the Roman army and Roman defensive needs did not have a significant impact on the urban structure of Syria and Mesopotamia in the Principate. No entirely new cities were founded as Roman colonies, and few developed as a consequence of a Roman military presence, the possible exception being Raphanaea. This contrasts with the western provinces and the Balkans, where the location of military bases and colonies substantially determined the later urban structure in those provinces. In Syria and Mesopotamia the Romans exploited the pattern of urbanism that already existed, which, for the most part, dated to the reign of Seleucus Nicator. In the location of its cities, the region remained Hellenistic for the first three centuries of Roman rule. It may seem obvious that Rome would have a strong impact on the urban development of provinces in the west, where cities did not exist, but little such impact in the east, where they did exist already. However, this was not inevitable, for, as will be demonstrated in chapter 2, defensive requirements from the mid-third century to the Arab conquests led to changes in the urban geography of Syria and Mesopotamia, despite the existence of firmly established cities throughout these provinces.

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six forts of "playing-card" form (and hence probably of this period) in nonurban contexts in Syria from Poidebard's aerial surveys. Gregory, in *Roman Military Architecture*, 1:28–31, 58, discusses the problematic dating of many of Poidebard's sites and explains the absence of auxiliary forts of traditional form in the region as the result of urban deployment of auxiliaries.

146. Isaac, *Limits*, 133.

147. Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 1:58.

There were two types of combined city-military base during the Principate. The first comprised places where existing urban fortifications were used by garrisons deployed in frontier areas, within the cities themselves. These were mainly in the frontier areas of the middle Euphrates valley and northern Mesopotamia, areas into which the Roman army expanded in the later second and early third centuries A.D. Dura-Europos is the clearest example, although Kifrin and Ana may fall into this group, perhaps along with Nisibis, Singara, and Hatra for the brief period when it held a Roman garrison.

The second group is cities further from the frontiers, in the traditional core of hellenized Syria, the heartland of the Roman province. Often these had Hellenistic fortifications and were sites with a tradition of military occupation, but the Romans may not have used the fortifications, preferring to locate camps outside existing city walls. This was a reasonable policy at sites where fortifications against a nearby enemy were not a requirement and where troops were held back from the frontier to be deployed forward when necessary. Such sites include Zeugma, Apamea, Antioch, and Seleucia Pieria.

An obvious question is, why did the Romans consistently base units in urban centers throughout their history? In the case of cities on frontiers, the existence of fortifications clearly was important in influencing the choice of site when defense against an immediate enemy was crucial. Otherwise the nature and motivation of pre-Roman settlement of an area was key. Northern Syria and Mesopotamia were principally urban in character, and controlling cities enabled the Roman army to control the existing population of an area efficiently. In southern Syria, where the city does not seem to have been the main form of settlement and where the population was dispersed in villages to a greater extent, occupying an existing city was no more effective than building a camp on a new site, as may have been the case at Raphanaea. Hellenistic cities were located for practical reasons that were still valid when they were occupied by the Romans. For example, control of important routes of communication may have been a factor in the location of many of Seleucus Nicator's foundations.<sup>148</sup> The strategic mobility conferred on the Roman army by occupation of centers well placed for the use of existing road and river routes was important, as was the control of routes for military supply, trade, and pastoral nomadism. Other sites were located to control limited

148. See Grainger, *Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 67–87.

resources in their hinterlands. For example, Dura and Kifrin controlled stretches of scarce agricultural land in the Euphrates valley, and Palmyra occupied an oasis site. Control of such resources gave the Romans control of the population that depended on them, and these resources also provided supplies for the Roman garrisons. Finally, one might note that most of the sites studied in this chapter were not only cities but cities with evidence of prior Parthian and Hellenistic military occupation. This leads one to wonder whether such sites were more amenable to the presence of troops because the populations were not necessarily more accepting of but at least more accustomed to military control.

The significance of this army-city relationship for the nature of social and economic relations in these provinces is not clear-cut. What is clear is the physical proximity of large bodies of civilians and soldiers in Syria and Mesopotamia. Military units were based close to or in cities. Even when troops in cities were separated from civilians in some formal way, as perhaps by the camp wall at Dura-Europos, the separation seems to have been permeable. It is also clear that at least by the early third century A.D. at Dura and Antioch, some elements of the army inhabited lodgings dispersed among the civilian population, at least on a temporary basis. Subsequent chapters consider whether this physical proximity equated to cultural integration.



## CHAPTER 2

### Fortress Cities in the East in the Later Roman Empire

In the later Roman empire, the stationing of troops in cities ceased to be particularly characteristic of the eastern armies, because garrisoning, fortification, and defense of cities became normal throughout the empire.<sup>1</sup> Defense of a stone- or brick-walled city was a standard feature of Near Eastern warfare for centuries before the arrival of the Romans. Sieges are a standard theme of Assyrian relief sculpture. Hellenistic cities of the Seleucid kingdom invariably were fortified, although many that were subsequently occupied by Roman forces were too distant from the enemy for their fortifications to be of value. However, in the middle Euphrates valley and in northern Mesopotamia, enemy forces were close enough for such fortifications to play a part in frontier defenses, and the Romans used them at such sites as Dura-Europos, Singara, and Nisibis. The adoption of walled cities as bases did not provide the Roman army with any form of technological superiority, as all of these cities fell at one or more times to the Sassanian Persians, whose siege capabilities are illustrated in dramatic fashion by the excavated remains of their siege mines at Dura-Europos.<sup>2</sup> However, they did force the attackers to choose between slowing down their attack and attempting to reduce the fortress on the one hand, and leaving an enemy-held fortress behind them, threatening their rear and supply lines, on the other. For example, according to Ammianus, in A.D. 359, when Ursicinus, the *magister militum per orientem*, was recalled from Mesopotamia to Antioch, the Roman defector Antoninus advised the Persians to push ahead with a speedy attack on Mesopotamia to take advantage of the change of leadership.<sup>3</sup> He suggested they avoid besieging cities, which would slow down the attack. When the Persians

1. See E.N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (1976), 127–90, especially 159–70.

2. See *Dura* 6, 188–205 and pl. xviii.

3. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.6.3.

did make their attack, the siege of the Roman fortress city of Amida delayed them for so long that they considered abandoning it and returning home.<sup>4</sup>

Walling of towns became usual in the west in the later third and particularly in the fourth century A.D. Luttwak regards this as an element in the empire-wide adoption of a coherent defensive strategy of defense-in-depth, a change in Roman practices brought about by enemy penetrations of more linear imperial frontiers in the later third century.<sup>5</sup> He attributes this change to the fact that most of Rome's enemies had little or no siege capability, although he notes that this was not true of the Sassanians. In fact, it is not necessary to view these changes as a universal, deliberate, and coherent strategy. Walling towns and cities was a logical reaction to penetrations of frontier defenses, and it probably took place when necessary and practical. Certainly the siting of individual fortresses involved local and even regional planning, but it did not necessarily involve the broad "defense-in-depth" that Luttwak envisages. Possibly experience with walled towns in the eastern provinces influenced the development of walled towns in the west, but this was such an obvious solution to the problem that it was unnecessary to assume eastern influences. However, Lander, in noting the greater complexity and prominence of towers on fortifications in the late Roman east, suggests, "it may be that Roman forces in the east had a deeper reliance on defensive measures, including fortifications and artillery, than did troops in the west."<sup>6</sup> Pre-Roman traditions in the eastern provinces meant that it was there that the Roman army first engaged in sieges of walled towns and adopted them for their own use, so it is likely that by the later empire, the eastern armies had a stronger tradition of making use of walled fortifications in battle on a regular basis rather than just as a last refuge.

The late third to early fifth centuries saw changes in the deployment of the eastern armies. Some of the sites discussed in chapter 1 provide evidence of military use after the third century, but the *Notitia Dignitatum* shows that new military bases predominated, some being isolated fortresses and forts, others being walled towns and cities. From the late third to the seventh century, northern Mesopotamia was the main theater of war between the Romans and Sassanians, and warfare focused on sieges

4. Ibid., 19.9.1.

5. Luttwak, *Grand Strategy*, 130–36.

6. Lander, *Roman Stone Fortifications*, 259.

of the great fortress cities of the region. Mesopotamia was the area where there were most fortress towns and cities and where they were strongest.<sup>7</sup>

There is little epigraphic evidence from these fortress cities. The number of inscriptions from the region falls dramatically from the mid-third century onward, and many inscriptions that have been found (Christian grave markers and dedications from Christian churches) are of little value for intensive study of the army in cities. Historical sources, primarily Ammianus' account of the Persian wars of the fourth century, provide details of garrisons and sometimes of the role of civilians in sieges. Published archaeological evidence is of mixed value. Much of the work that has been done consists of aerial photography or surveyors' plans and architectural descriptions of sites, sometimes with a brief surface examination of material on the site.<sup>8</sup> The paucity of stratified excavations and the absence of a clear chronological typology of fortification types has led to the tendency, described by Lander,<sup>9</sup> to attribute late Roman fortifications to Diocletian in the absence of any other evidence, because of his reputation as a builder of city walls in the works of panegyricists. The same is true of Justinian, hailed as a builder of fortifications in Procopius' *Buildings*, an image contrasting with the same author's *Wars* and *Anecdota*.

Late imperial fortress cities were located throughout the frontier areas of Roman Mesopotamia and Syria. Those of northern Mesopotamia are prominent in the historical record because that area was the main theater of confrontation between the Roman and Sassanian empires from the third to the sixth century. These can be divided into two groups. The first includes cities lost to the Romans as a consequence of Jovian's peace treaty of A.D. 363. They do not appear in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, which reflects the frontier situation after their loss. These cities are Singara and Nisibis, whose early histories have been discussed in chapter 1, and Bezabde on the Tigris. The second group includes cities that were still held by the Romans during the wars of the sixth century. Some of these, Amida in particular, were already important during the fourth century. Others, such as Dara, became prominent only in the early Byzantine

7. The strength of the defended cities of northern Mesopotamia relative to the Euphrates frontier of Syria was a common theme among historians of the later eastern empire, and the weakness of the Euphrates sometimes was exploited by the Persians. Cf. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.6.3 and Procopius *Wars* 1.17.34.

8. See Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 1:28–31, on the problems of dating from these kinds of evidence.

9. Lander, *Roman Stone Fortifications*, 183–84.

period. This last group includes Amida, Rhesaina-Theodosiopolis, and Constantia-Constantina.

As noted earlier, ancient authors considered the strength of the Roman eastern frontier in the later empire to lie in the fortress cities of northern Mesopotamia and contrasted this with the weakness of the middle Euphrates. On two occasions the Persians seem to have attacked Syria directly by following the Euphrates rather than by attempting to capture the strongest Roman cities further north. This happened in A.D. 252 and A.D. 540 when Sapor I and Chosroes I respectively broke through Roman frontier defenses and captured Antioch.<sup>10</sup> However, this route was used only rarely, as there was both relatively little agricultural land to feed an advancing army and little water away from the Euphrates itself. Also, if the Persians took this route, their approach march to the frontier led through the heartland of their own empire in Mesopotamia, and the passage of a large army would have caused nearly as much damage to their own people as to the Romans. Three important Roman fortress cities on the southern limits of the province of Osrhoene defended this route along the Euphrates valley on the left bank from Circesium at the junction of the Euphrates and the Khabur to Callinicum on the Syrian frontier, by way of Zenobia on the right bank, in Syria, midway between them.

Callinicum was the westernmost fortress city in Osrhoene. Beyond it lay the Syrian provinces. Traditionally the fortress of Sura lay at the eastern edge of Syria,<sup>11</sup> where a desert road passed by way of the fortress city of Resafa-Sergiopolis to Palmyra, itself a combination of city and fortress from the tetrachic period. West of Sura on the Euphrates lay the remains of a large defended urban site at modern Dibsi Faraj, probably Roman and Byzantine Athis-Neocaesarea. Some of the older cities of western Syria had wall circuits, often dating back to their Hellenistic foundations, but contrary to Mouterde and Poidebard's theory of a second line of defense, a "*limes* of Chalcis" did not exist.<sup>12</sup> The fortress cities of Mesopotamia and the Euphrates valley formed the only line of defense for Syria, and once this was broken, the Syrian provinces could

10. See Ammianus Marcellinus 23.5.2–3; Procopius *Wars* 2.5.4f.

11. At Sura, the third-century Peutinger Table notes *finis exercitus Syriatic(a)e* [the limit of the Syrian army].

12. This interpretation of a variety of fortifications in central Syria as a secondary line of defense behind the frontier is a basic thesis of Mouterde and Poidebard, *Le Limes de Chalcis*.

be overrun. In the later empire, Antioch continued to serve the role it had in the Principate, as an imperial headquarters, mustering place for large expeditionary forces and logistical base for the support of wars on the frontier.

Once more the two main questions to be considered with regard to the army and civilian communities are, firstly, to what degree did the army and defensive needs determine the urban structure of the provinces, and second, what evidence is there for the physical relationship of soldiers to civilians within those cities?<sup>13</sup> The first question requires consideration of the nature and origins of the communities that housed military bases. Very few of them were like the legionary bases of the Principate, existing cities with high status and Hellenistic military associations. Nisibis is the only city that seems to have been a Hellenistic military base, a legionary fortress of the Principate, and a fortress city of the late empire.

In the most common development pattern described for fortress cities in historical literature, a small community, often a *κώμη* or occasionally a Hellenistic *πόλις* that had declined to insignificance, was chosen by an emperor because of its strategically important position; provided with fortifications, a garrison, and a civilian population; then given a higher status, generally that of *polis*.<sup>14</sup> Sixth-century sources often claim that existing fortress cities were strengthened or rebuilt by emperors of that time. Examples of this foundation pattern for fortress cities include Amida (fig. 10), said to have been fortified by Constantius II when it was *civitas perquam brevis* [an extremely small city], and, according to Procopius, rebuilt by Justinian.<sup>15</sup> According to Malalas, Rhesaina (fig. 11) was only a *κώμη* (village) when Theodosius I renamed it Theodosiopolis and gave it civic status.<sup>16</sup> This may indicate that it had declined since the Severan period, when it was a *colonia*, or it may just be an exaggeration by Malalas of Theodosius' activities. The walls of Constantia-Constantina are said to have been built by Constantius II, those of Circesium by Diocletian and Justinian; and Callinicum was Hellenistic Nicephorium, which seems to have declined but been revived as an important fortress by the reign of

13. For detailed evidence regarding these cities, see app. B.

14. The term *κώμη* often is translated as "village." In fact, it was applied to a range of nucleated communities lacking *πόλις* status, including settlements much closer in size to ancient cities than our city-village distinction implies. However, they tended to be smaller and more rural than Greco-Roman cities, and they often lacked some or all of the institutions and public buildings of the latter.

15. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.9.1; Procopius *Buildings* 2.3.27.

16. Malalas 345.

Julian.<sup>17</sup> A similar process seems to have occurred at Byzantine Dara, which was built in A.D. 505 by the emperor Anastasius as an outpost opposite Persian-occupied Nisibis, on the site of a settlement described as κώμην ἄδοξον [an insignificant village], given the status of *metropolis*, and, according to Procopius, rebuilt by Justinian.<sup>18</sup>

These accounts suggest a pattern of deliberate imperial fortification and expansion of small settlements for strategic reasons. This pattern appears suspiciously regular and leads one to suspect that the regularity derives from literary genre rather than reality, from panegyric depictions of emperor as builder and defender of his people. One might test this literary model of development with archaeological data, but the archaeological work that has been done at most of these sites has been limited to the recording of standing fortifications and to rather inconclusive debates regarding chronology based on architectural criteria. Such studies present a very static picture of a city, in contrast to stratigraphic excavation, which provides a more dynamic picture of urban development. Fortunately stratigraphic excavation at one site, Dibli Faraj (probably late Roman Neocaesarea) on the Euphrates (figs. 12 and 13), does provide such a dynamic picture of the site's development, which we may use to test the literary model of fortress city growth already described.

The large fortified urban settlement at Dibli Faraj, by the Euphrates to the west of Sura, is probably the settlement known as Athis in the middle imperial period and as Neocaesarea in the later Roman and early Byzantine empire. While excavations carried out on the site in the 1970s have not been fully published, the stratigraphic sequence recorded provides us with the only clear and accurate archaeological picture of the development of a late imperial fortress city. These excavations reveal the limitations of the architectural studies carried out on other sites and provide a paradigm for the historical and topographical development of many other such cities.

The identification of the site and the results of the excavation there

17. Procopius *Buildings* 3.4.15–20 presents an interesting dynamic view of a community developing, albeit from the Principate, under similar processes. Melitene in Armenia was a legionary fortress in the Principate, was given polis status in the reign of Trajan, became the provincial metropolis, and thus attracted more settlement. The population spread beyond the walls into an adjacent plain, and eventually Justinian provided it with a larger wall circuit.

18. Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* (ed. Wright), 90; Procopius *Wars* 1.10.13; Procopius *Buildings* 2.1.4 (describing the “village”) and 2.1.10–2.2.3 (on Justinian’s rebuilding).

have been discussed in articles by Harper.<sup>19</sup> The identification of Dibsi Faraj with Athis in Ptolemy's *Geography* has long been proposed.<sup>20</sup> Harper notes that archaeological evidence shows the site flourishing in the fourth to sixth centuries A.D., yet there are no references to Athis in this period, notably not in Procopius' *Buildings*, even though the walls of Dibsi Faraj seem to have been rebuilt about the time of Justinian. Harper proposes that Athis underwent a name change and became Neocaesarea, an otherwise unidentified city in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, Procopius' *Buildings*, and George of Cyprus' list of cities in this area. This convincing argument has the dual merits of identifying an archaeological site of clear importance that would otherwise be unnamed and of placing a city whose name is known from several historical sources but that remains unidentified on the ground.

Romano-Byzantine development of the site took place in three main phases. The first was a small town of the first to late third century A.D. Traces of this early settlement were located in areas 0, 1, 2, and 3 of the excavation, the western part of the citadel that formed the focus of all phases of occupation. Structures of this phase were of undressed limestone, the fine pottery was Eastern Sigillata of mostly first-century forms, and few coins of this period were found.<sup>21</sup> Probably this was Ptolemy's Athis.

The second phase began in the late third century A.D. The whole citadel area, covering five hectares, was surrounded by a wall circuit with roughly square corner and interval towers. Harper notes a similarity between this wall circuit and the tetrachic walls at Palmyra, but the dating evidence is not restricted to architectural criteria. Early excavated contexts against the wall produced tetrachic coins dating to immediately before A.D. 294, providing a *terminus post quem* for their construction.<sup>22</sup> Harper suggests that a historically likely occasion for their construction was A.D. 296/7, when Galerius campaigned in the area. He also suggests that the name Neocaesarea was given to the site at that time, in honor of Galerius as Caesar, presumably along with civic status. The earliest mention of Neocaesarea as

19. R.P. Harper, "Excavations at Dibsi Faraj, Northern Syria, 1972–1974: A Preliminary Note on the Site and Its Monuments," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 29 (1975): 319–37; "Two Excavations on the Euphrates Frontier, 1968–1974," *Studien zu Militärgrenzen Roms* 2, (1977): 461–72.

20. Ptolemy *Geography* 5.14.13.

21. See Harper, "Excavations at Dibsi Faraj," 325.

22. *Ibid.*, 326.

a city was in A.D. 325, at the Council of Nicaea.<sup>23</sup> The garrison installed in the walled city may have been *equites Mauri Illyriciani* recorded for Neocaesarea in the *Notitia Dignitatum*.<sup>24</sup> A number of public buildings belong to this phase. The so-called *principia* at the north end of the citadel seems to have been constructed with the wall circuit. Harper suggests that this had a governmental or military function, and he proposes that the northeast part of the complex was the military headquarters, the *principia* proper, and that the southern part was the *praetorium*, the home of the commander.<sup>25</sup> A basilica at the western limit of the citadel has a *terminus post quem* of A.D. 341 from coins, and a damaged, reused, mosaic inscription from the area seems to give a date of A.D. 345/6.<sup>26</sup> The preliminary report is too limited in scope to provide a detailed account of buildings elsewhere within the wall circuit, but structures of this phase, built of small blocks of dressed limestone, were found in most areas investigated within the walls.<sup>27</sup> Possibly these included civilian housing, although no clear evidence has been published. However, investigation of area 6, south of the walled citadel, revealed evidence of an extramural settlement defended by bank and ditch earthworks. The small structures excavated had mosaic flooring that Harper describes as of fourth-century type, and he records that sectioning of the earthworks also provided limited evidence of fourth-century construction. He interprets this occupation as fourth-century expansion of the city following an increase in population linked to new civic status.<sup>28</sup> The total area within the earthworks is some twenty hectares. Outside the walls is a fourth-century bath building on low ground, where it would be easy to pipe water, and well to the east, beyond the extramural settlement, is a *martyrium* basilica with an inscription stating that the work had been finished in A.D. 429.<sup>29</sup> Imported pottery of this phase included much African Red Slip and Late Roman "C" wares. In contrast to the few coins of the first phase, there were large quantities of coins of the tetrarchy and later, especially bronze issues of the house of Constantine.<sup>30</sup>

23. Harper, "Two Excavations on the Euphrates Frontier," 457; a list of the cities represented at the Council of Nicaea is provided in Millar, *Roman Near East*, 214.

24. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 33.26.

25. Harper, "Excavations at Dibsi Faraj," 328.

26. See *ibid.*, 330.

27. See *ibid.*, 324–25.

28. See *ibid.*, 328.

29. See *ibid.*, 329, 333.

30. See *ibid.*, 325.

The third phase of the site is early Byzantine. The main change in this period was the reconstruction of the wall circuit with alternating bands of hard limestone conglomerate and brick and large new rectangular towers, along with some of hexagonal form. Modifications also were made to the gates of the city. However, stratigraphic evidence for the dating of this phase is not as good as the first phase. Harper notes that this phase of fortification takes account of an extramural bath building with a mosaic dated to A.D. 453 to the north of the citadel, and he suggests a Justinianic date. Procopius states that Justinian rebuilt the walls of Neocaesarea, which were weak and too low.<sup>31</sup> This account does not really describe the tetrarchic walls of Dibsi Faraj, but it does not necessarily undermine the identification of the site, as Procopius had a tendency to exaggerate the importance of Justinian's work. Nor, for the same reason, does it necessarily date the archaeologically recorded reconstruction to the reign of Justinian, although such a date is possible. Byzantine construction within the walls is characterized by construction in mud brick and limestone, and there is a sixth-century phase (dated by mosaics) in the building of the extramural area 6. Fewer Byzantine coins were found, mainly issues of Anastasius and Justinian, but some dating as late as the reign of Heraclius.<sup>32</sup> There is evidence of occupation of the site as late as the tenth century and none of violent Persian or Arab destruction. Now the site lies under water, flooded by Syrian dam development. Only the highest part of the citadel is still visible.

The excavation of Dibsi Faraj is particularly interesting because the combination of a good stratified excavation with a likely historical identification enables us to test literary models for the development of a fortress city. It started out as a small settlement without city status but was fortified for strategic reasons to provide a defensive position against Persian penetration of the Euphrates valley. This increase in defensive strength was accompanied by an increase in status and the construction of public buildings commensurate with that status. The total occupied area of the settlement grew and included extramural civilian housing, probably filled by a combination of military dependents and local civilians attracted by the security of the walls and the status and facilities of the city. Finally the late Roman city was refortified in the early Byzantine period. The history corresponds quite well to the scattered historical

31. Harper, "Excavations at Dibsi Faraj," 326; Procopius *Buildings* 2.9.18–20.

32. See Harper, "Excavations at Dibsi Faraj," 325.

evidence for the origins and growth of most of the late Roman and Byzantine fortress cities, including Bezaabde, Amida, Dara, Rhesaina, Constantina, Circesium, Zenobia, and Callinicum, and suggests that the literary model was not a complete fabrication but had some basis in imperial activity, even if this was exaggerated sometimes.

Each of these fortress cities was said to have started out as a small settlement without civic status or, in some cases, an old city that had declined to insignificance. The distinction between these settlements before and after their fortification is exaggerated to some degree in English by the tendency to translate πόλις as “city” and κώμη as “village,” when the latter might be a fairly large and elaborate nucleated community lacking only formal city status. However, even formal change of status had some significance, and the archaeological evidence we have suggests they grew in population and architectural elaboration. These communities were given defenses for strategic reasons due to deliberate imperial decisions, and they thereafter developed in status, amenities, and population as civilian settlements as well as military posts. In effect, they served as military colonies. Dibsi Faraj provides us with an archaeological model for the development of such a community, which may be typical of other sites with less preserved or recorded archaeological evidence.

Outside this general pattern stand late imperial Palmyra and Antioch. After the capture of Palmyra by Aurelian, the city virtually disappears from historical accounts of the area. The two exceptions to this, the *Notitia Dignitatum* and Procopius’ *Buildings*, both refer to it primarily as a military base. The former lists the garrison as *legio I Illyricorum*, and it is possible that this unit was installed after Aurelian’s capture of the city or shortly afterward.<sup>33</sup> There are substantial remains of a tetrarchic fortress within a late wall circuit, and while the city seems to have been reduced greatly in population and importance after the Aurelianic sack, it still had a moderate civilian population in addition to the troops; hence it was a fortress city, but with greater continuity of military and civilian occupation and of status (as *polis* and *colonia*) than most of the others.

The role of late imperial Antioch in the wars on the eastern frontier was similar to its role in the Principate. It was a transit and mustering point for armies. While there is only limited evidence of a permanent garrison, it is clear that often there were troops in and around the city. Some of these may have been the *comitatenses* of the *magister militum*

33. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 32.30.

*per orientem* who was based there. Others were the military retinues of other officials. But most important of all, it was the place where imperial armies, such as those of Constantius II and Julian, gathered for expeditions against the Persians.

Thus it seems that military needs had a greater impact on urbanization in Syria and Mesopotamia in the later empire than in the Principate. Small communities were selected for their strategic importance, fortified, and enhanced in status. At the same time, their civilian populations grew. This represents a form of de facto military colonization in frontier areas.

The second question to be asked regarding the army and cities in the later empire regards the degree of physical mixing between the civilian population and the military garrison. This seems to have been high. By definition, a fortress city played a military role as a place of defense and a civilian role as a place of residence and administration. With the possible exceptions of extramural settlements detected at such sites as Zenobia and Dibli Faraj and of citadels, which probably were defended as a place of last resort, the whole city equated to the defended area, and the city and the fortress coincided spatially. Indeed, the frequency with which civilians defended their cities alone or in conjunction with troops even weakens the dichotomy between soldier and civilian in these cities. Whether there was significant separation of the civilian and military populations within the walls is difficult to say. The archaeological evidence from the sites studied does not provide us with a picture as detailed as that from Dura-Europos (and even there, with plenty of evidence, conclusions were ambiguous). At some sites, such as Palmyra, Zenobia, and Dibli Faraj, there is evidence for citadels and complexes that may have been *principia/praetoria* associated with the army or military command. There is a literary reference to barracks at Dara, but there is also considerable evidence for the billeting of soldiers in private houses in the later empire. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

To see what "barracks" within an urban site in the late Roman east looked like, we have to turn to Arabia. At Umm-el-Jimal, about twenty kilometers southwest of Bostra, there is a freestanding, slightly trapezoidal fort ca. 55 meters by 33.75 meters (0.186 ha) in size, within the urban wall circuit. It consists of a courtyard with blocks of rooms around it and a six-story tower in the southeast corner. It has a single entrance and high, solid external walls, not shared with surrounding buildings except for a chapel added later on the east side. Thus the fort could be defended if the town walls were captured or against the population of the town if

necessary.<sup>34</sup> Butler, who originally studied the site, suggested it may have been the *κἀστελλος* that a fragmentary inscription from the site records as having been built by Flavius Pelasgius Antipater, *comes* and *dux*, perhaps in A.D. 412–3.<sup>35</sup>

The legions based in late Roman fortress cities were smaller than legions based at cities in the earlier empire, but this does not mean that their impact on the civilian populations was diminished. The smaller garrisons were spread more evenly throughout the frontier provinces. Most of the fortress cities were smaller than the cities of the early legionary bases, and hence smaller garrisons may have had a proportionately similar or greater impact. Furthermore, in wartime, cities saw an influx of troops in addition to their regular garrisons.

The first issue considered in this chapter was whether the army and defensive requirements shaped the urban development of the provinces to any degree. In contrast to the early imperial situation, some late imperial cities were founded as dual civilian and military communities with specific defense requirements in mind. By combining the literary and archaeological evidence, a picture emerges of small communities fortified (often as refuges for the rural population), given enhanced status as cities and public buildings, and growing in population. At Dibsī Faraj and Zenobia, not all of this population could be accommodated within the walls, so extramural settlements with secondary defenses developed. These may have existed at other sites but survive less well than the stone walls of the main fortifications. The fortress cities lay outside the core of urbanized Hellenistic Syria. Military requirements stimulated urban development in a process of de facto military colonization with parallels in the western provinces of the early empire.

The parallels should not be drawn too broadly, and the overall impact of the process should not be exaggerated. The process was spread over three hundred years, and the essential urban structure of Syria appears virtually the same in George of Cyprus' sixth-century *Descriptio Orbis Romani* as in the late Hellenistic period. But the fortress cities of the later

34. See S.T. Parker, "The Later Castellum ('Barracks')," in *Umm el-Jimal: A Frontier Town and Its Landscape in Northern Jordan*, ed. de Vries (1998), 1: 131–42, with figs. 6 (building no. 1) and 83.

35. *Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria*, div. II, sec. A, pt. 3, ed. H.C. Butler (1919), 166–71 (structure); *ibid.*, div. III, sec. A, pt. 3, ed. E. Littmann (1921), 136f., no. 237 (inscription).

empire represent both a significant proportion of the change that did occur in the urban structure of the region as a whole and a very significant phenomenon in the frontier regions of northern Mesopotamia and the Euphrates valley.

The second issue considered in this chapter was the physical proximity of soldiers and civilians in the late Roman east. Once again, we see that soldiers were deployed in and around cities, in physical proximity to large bodies of civilians. In parts 2 and 3 of this study, the question of whether this physical proximity gave rise to close social, cultural, and economic ties will be considered.



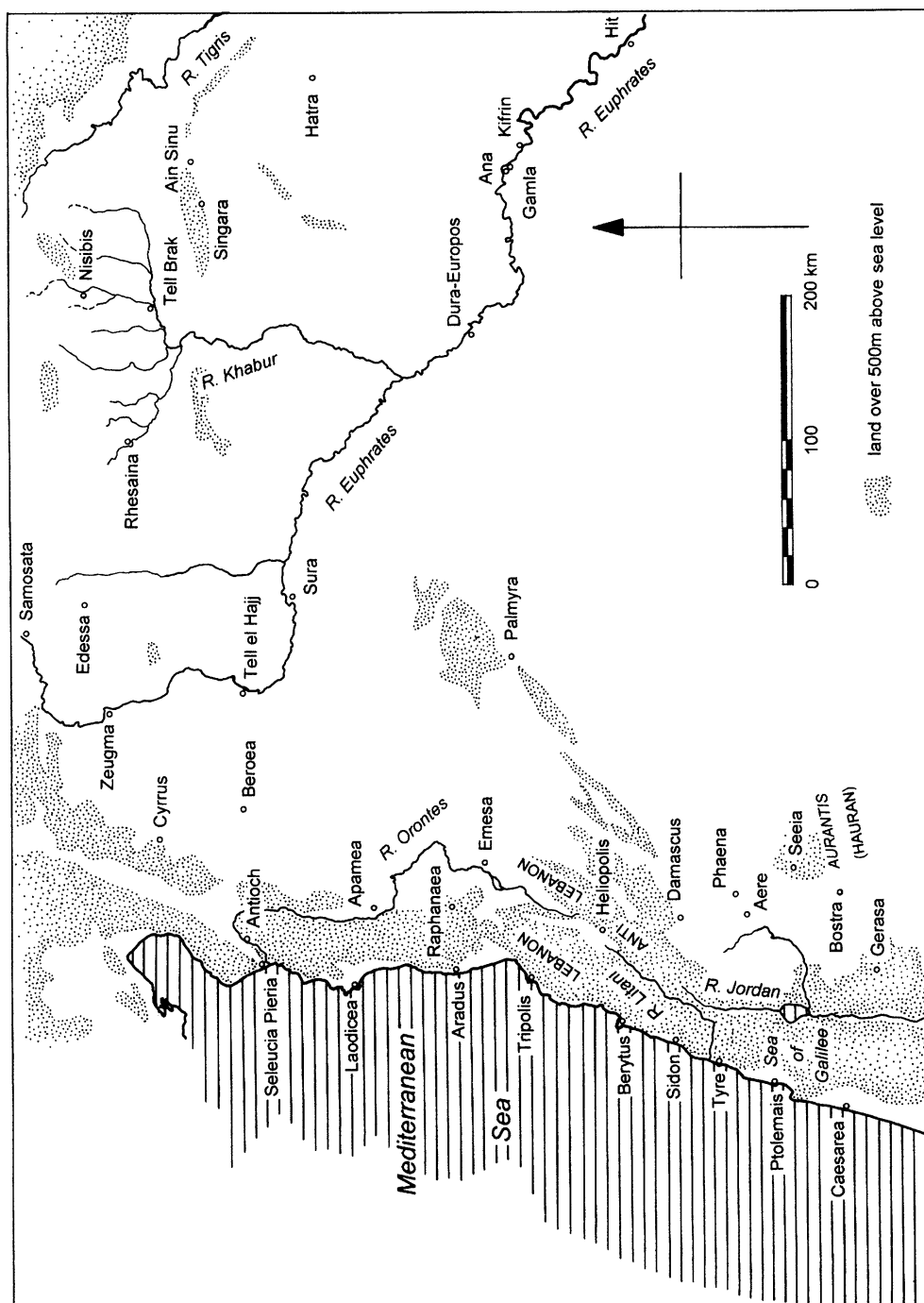


Fig. 1. Sites discussed in chapter 1 and appendix A.

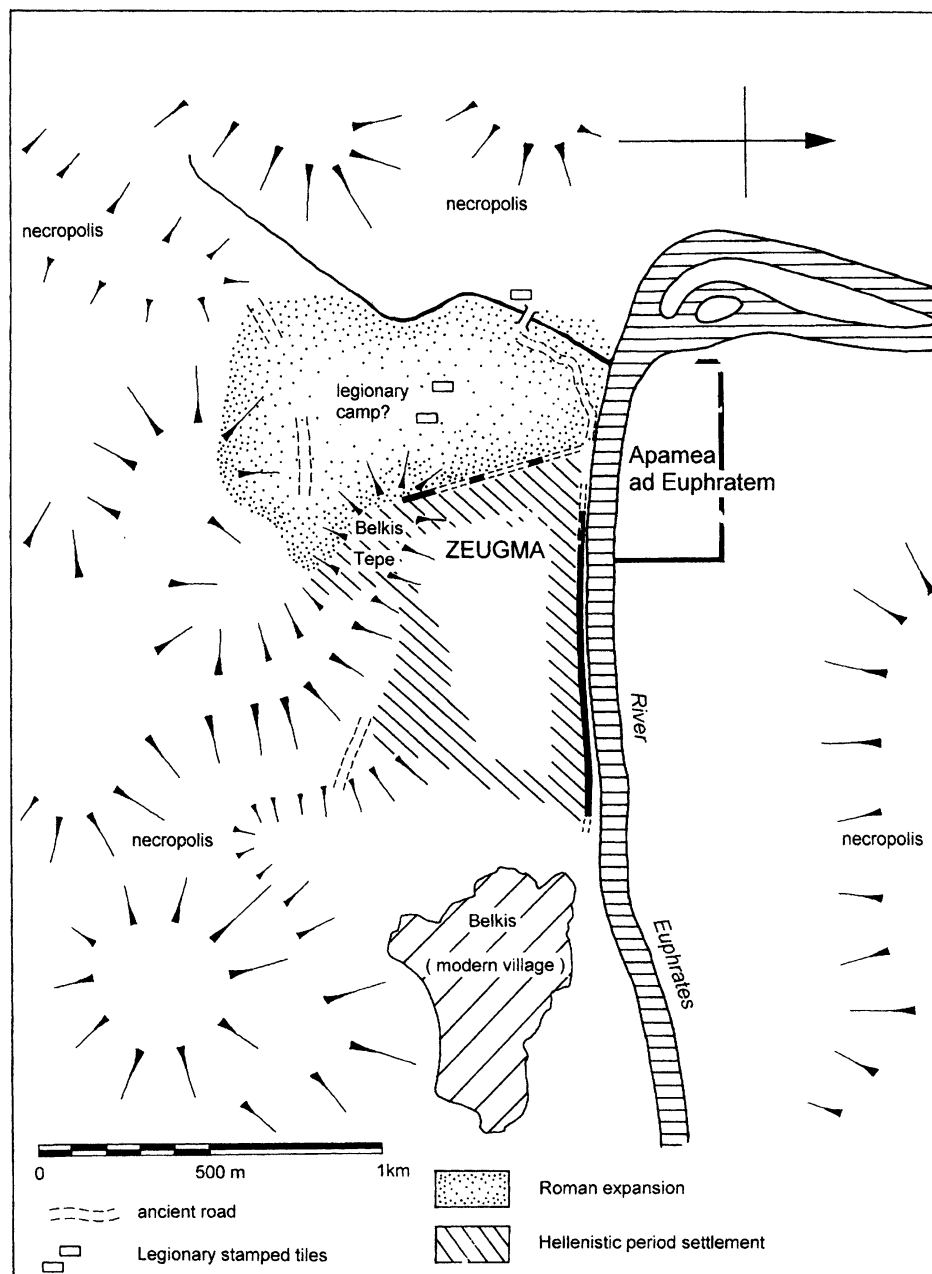


Fig. 2. Zeugma (Belkis), showing possible location of legionary camp. Redrawn from J. Wagner, *Seleukeia am Euphrat Zeugma* (1976), map 2. (By permission of Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, Weisbaden.)

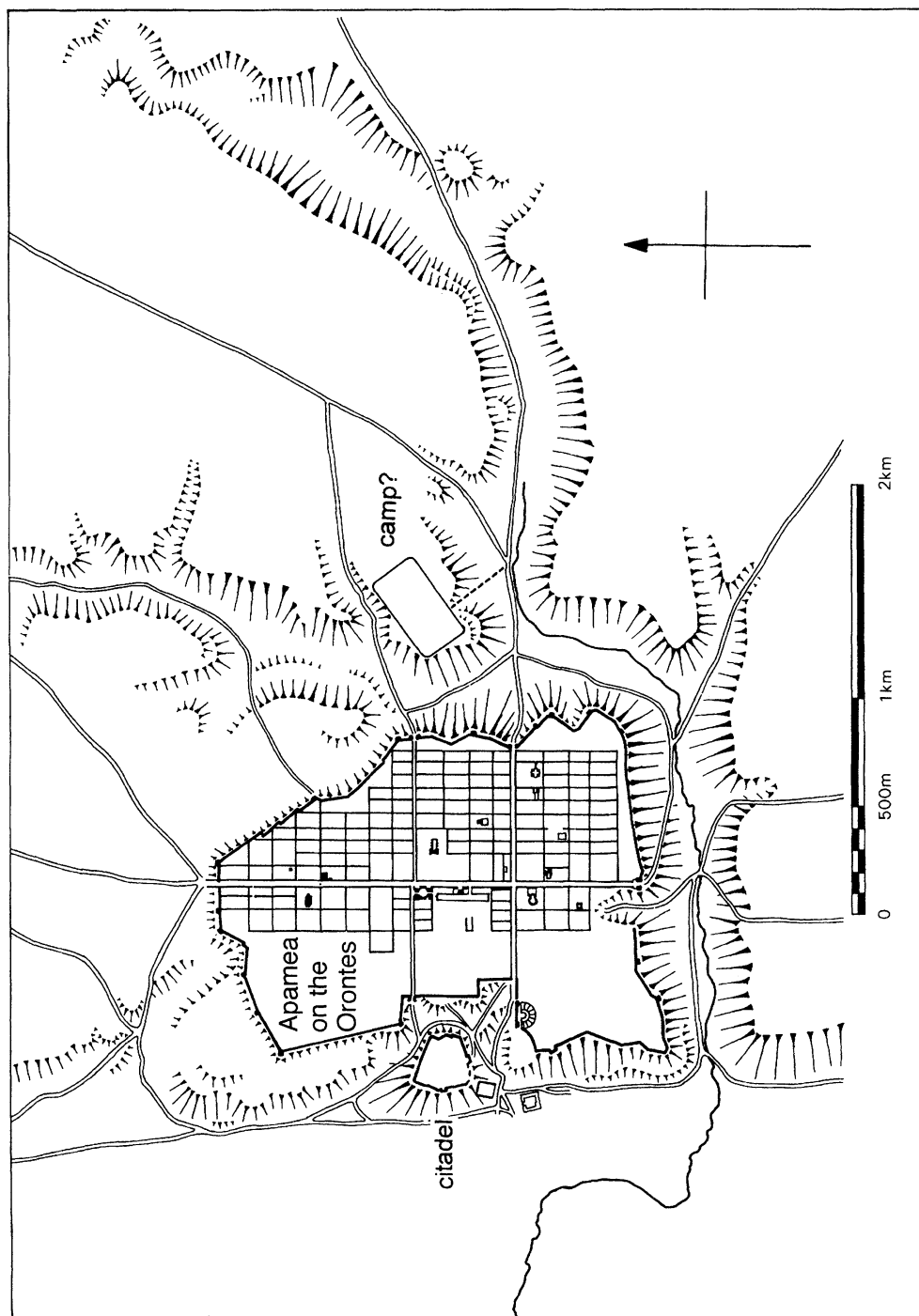
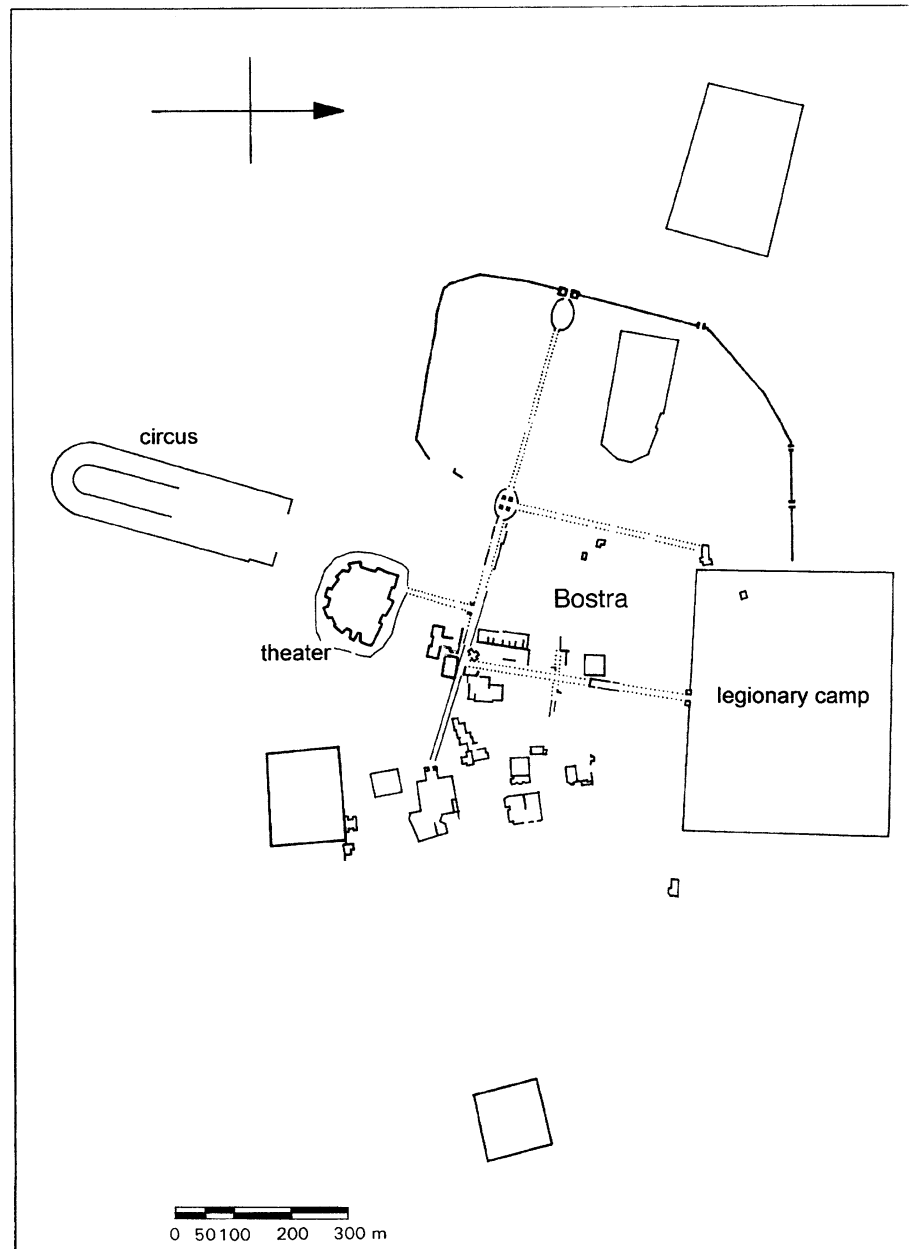


Fig. 3. Apamea on the Orontes, showing possible location of legionary camp. Redrawn from J.-Ch. Balty, "Apamée (1986): Nouvelles données sur l'armée romaine d'orient et les raids sassanides du milieu du IIIe siècle," *CRAI* (1987), fig. 10. (By permission of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.)



**Fig. 4.** Bostra (Bosra), showing probable location of legionary camp. Redrawn from an aerial photograph overlay in M. Sartre, *Bostra des origines à l'Islam* 1985, plate 1). (By permission of Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, Paris.)

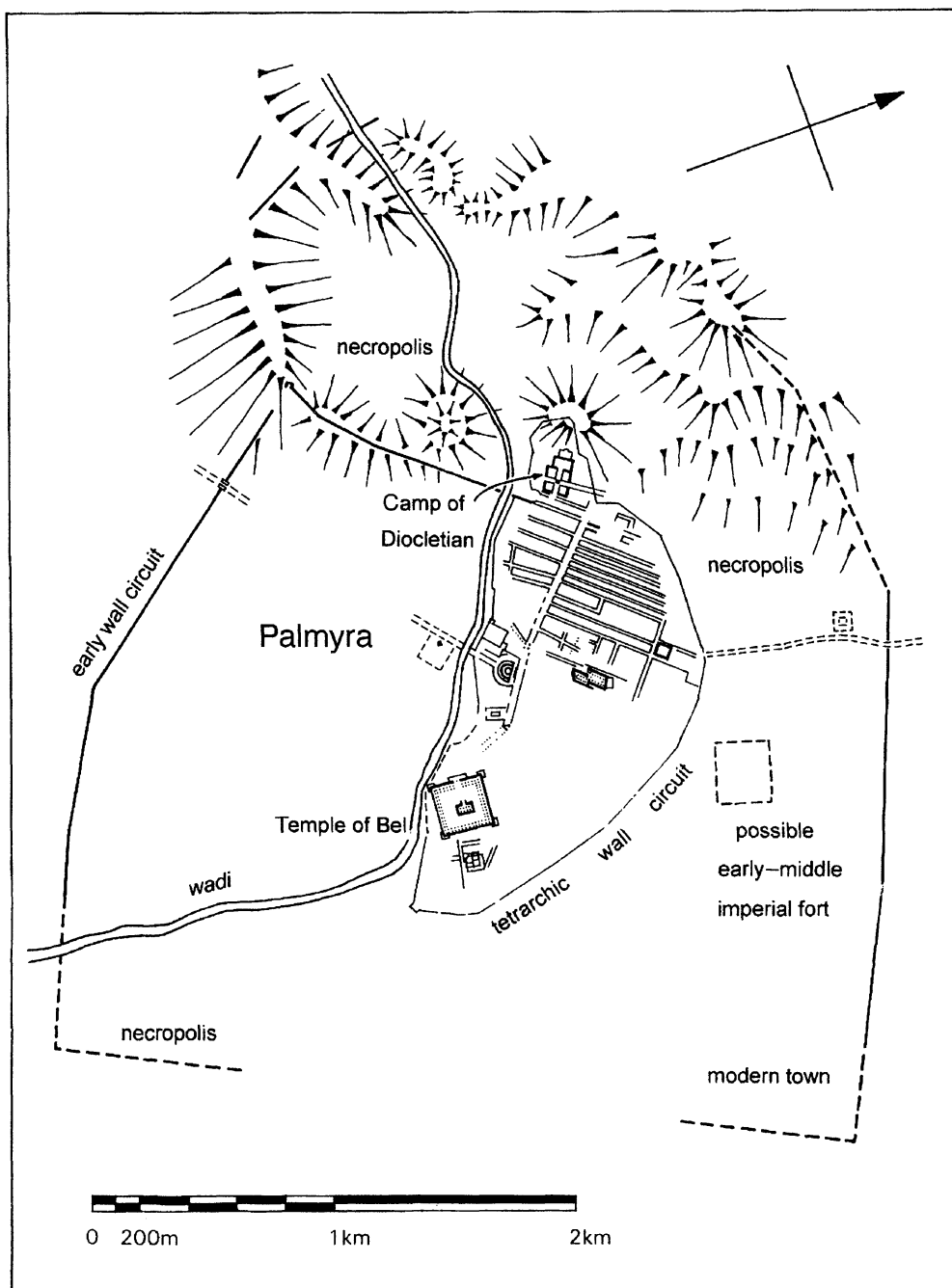


Fig. 5. Palmyra, general plan. Redrawn from J.F. Matthews, "The Tax Law of Palmyra: Evidence for Economic History in a City of the Roman East," *JRS* 74 (1984): map 1, with elements added from D. Kennedy and D. Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier from the Air* (1990), fig. 83. (By permission of J.F. Matthews and the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies for the former and by permission of Routledge for the latter.)

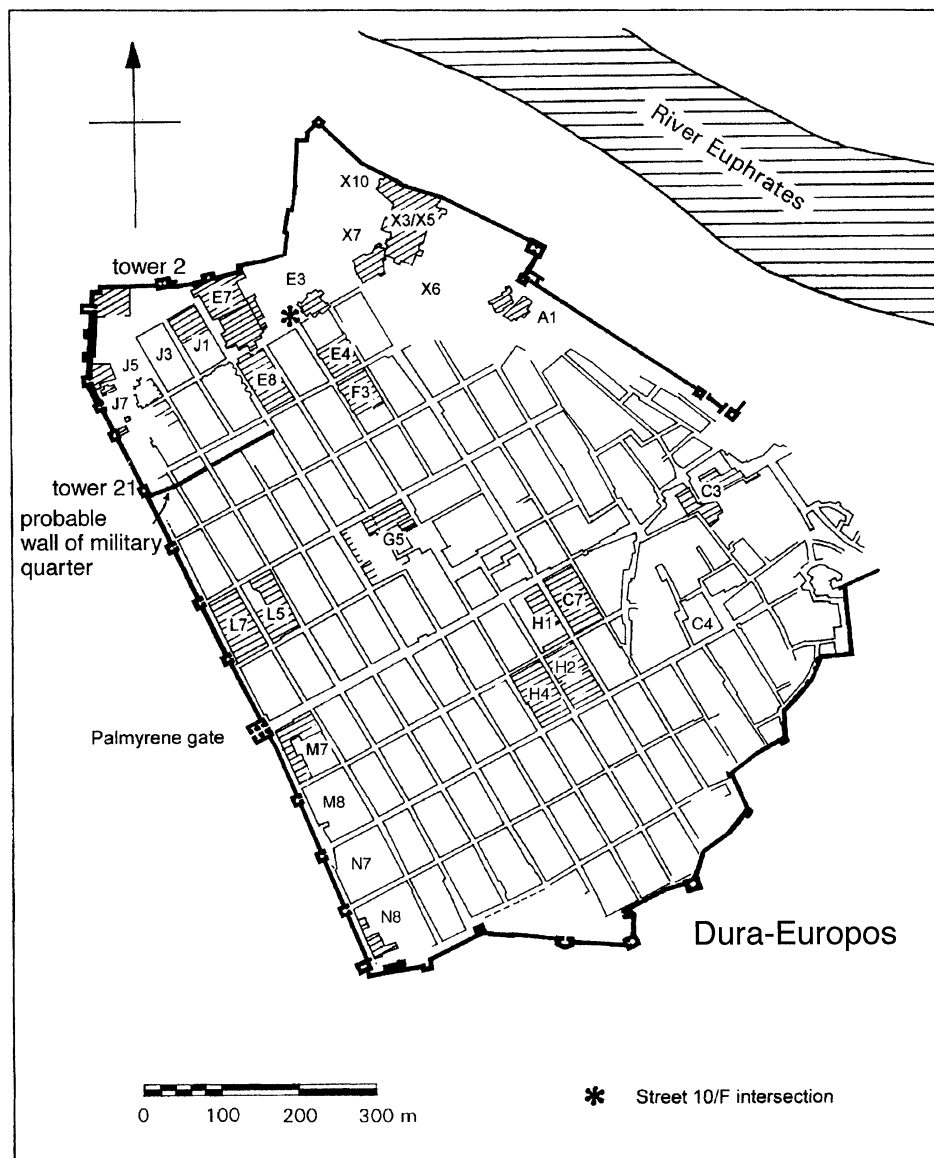


Fig. 6. Dura-Europos. A1, "Temple of the Roman Archers"/"Military Temple"; C3, bath; C4, Temple of Zeus Megistos, C7, house with evidence of military use; E3, bath; E4, barracks converted from housing; E7, legionary headquarters (*principia*, termed *praetorium* in excavation reports) and auxiliary headquarters in Temple of Azzanathkona; E8, barracks converted from housing; F3, bath and amphitheater; G5, "entertainers' guild house"/brothel; H1, Temple of the Gaddé; H2, Temple of Atargatis; H4, Temple of Artemis; J1, legionary commander's house?; J3/J5, Temple of Bel ("Temple of the Palmyrene Gods"); J7, *mithraeum* and barracks converted from housing; L5, Temple of Adonis and house with evidence of military use; L7, "House of the Roman Scribes"; M7, bath; M8/N7, Temple of Zeus Kyrios; N8, Temple of Aphlad; X3/5, "Palace of the *Dux Ripae*"; X7, *dolicheneum*. Redrawn from S.B. Downey, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: Final Report III*, pt. 1, fasc. 1: *The Heracles Sculpture* (1969), p. 107. (By permission of Yale University Art Gallery.)

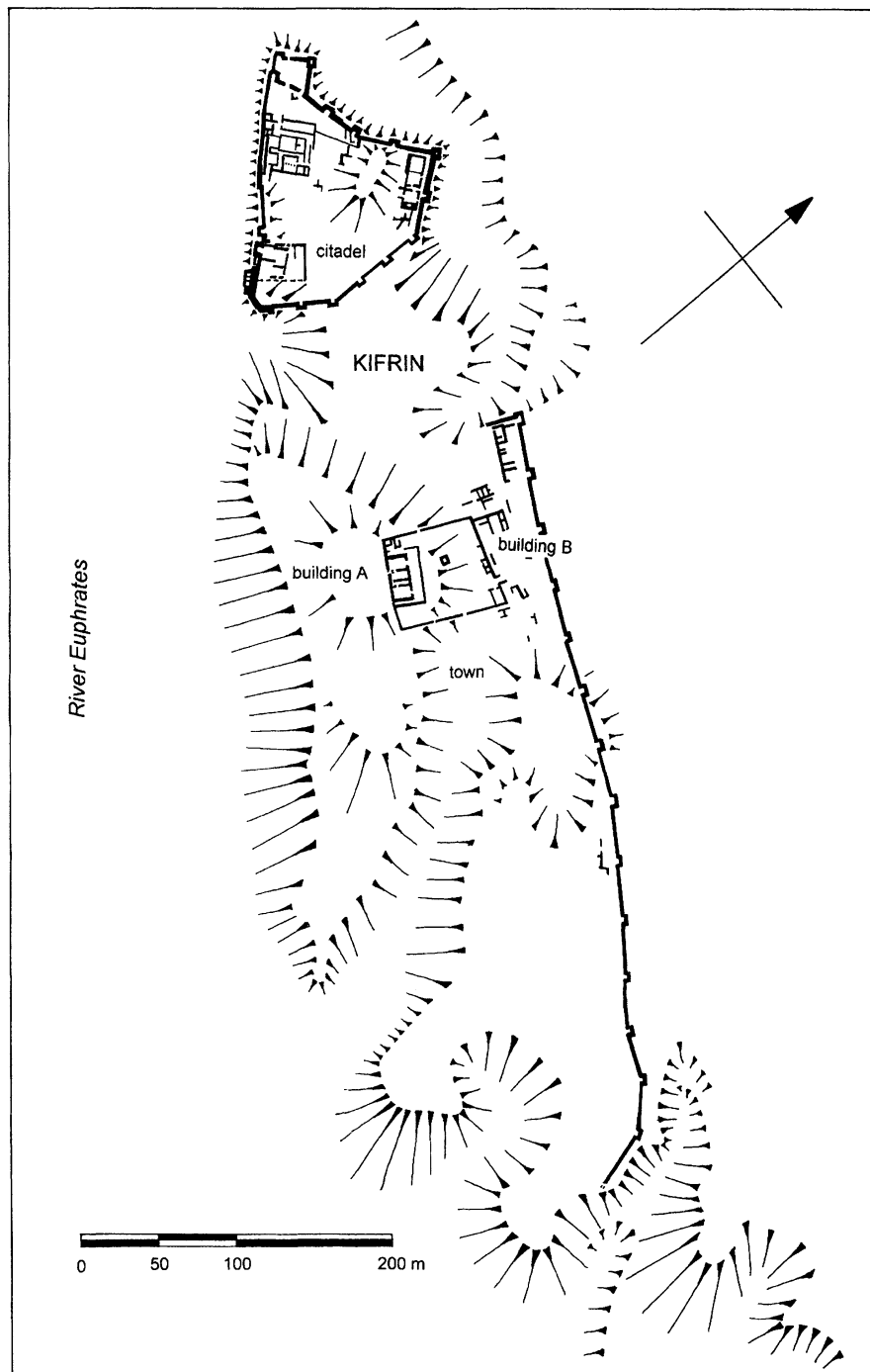


Fig. 7. Kifrin. Redrawn from E. Valtz, "Kifrin, a Fortress of *Limes* on the Euphrates," *Mesopotamia* 22 (1987): fig. A. (By permission of Casa Editrice Le Lettere, Firenze.)

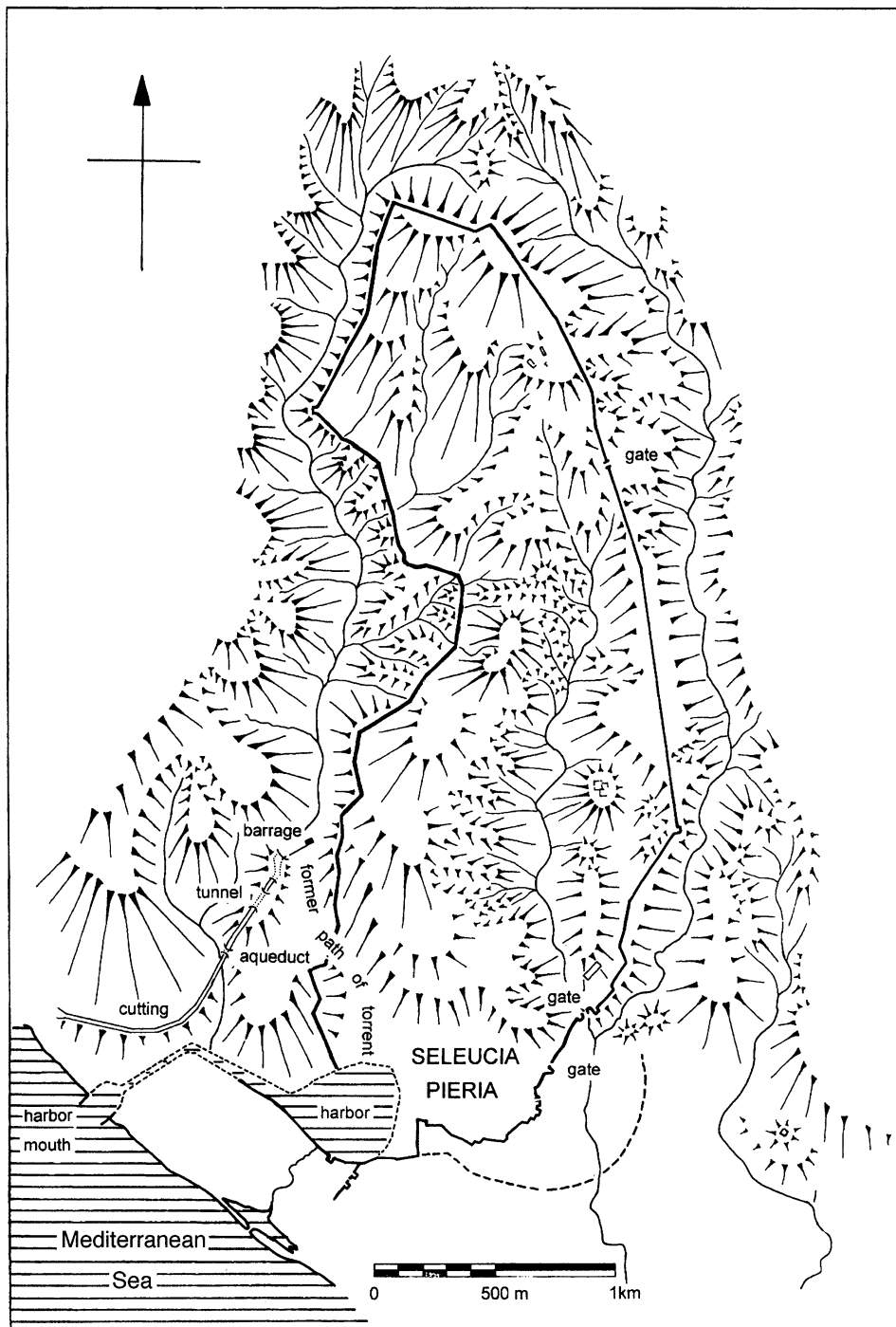


Fig. 8. Seleucia Pieria. Redrawn from D. van Berchem, "Le port de Séleucie de Piérie et l'infrastructure logistique des guerres parthiques," *Bjb* 185 (1985): plan 1. (By permission of the Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn, Landschaftsverband Rhineland.)

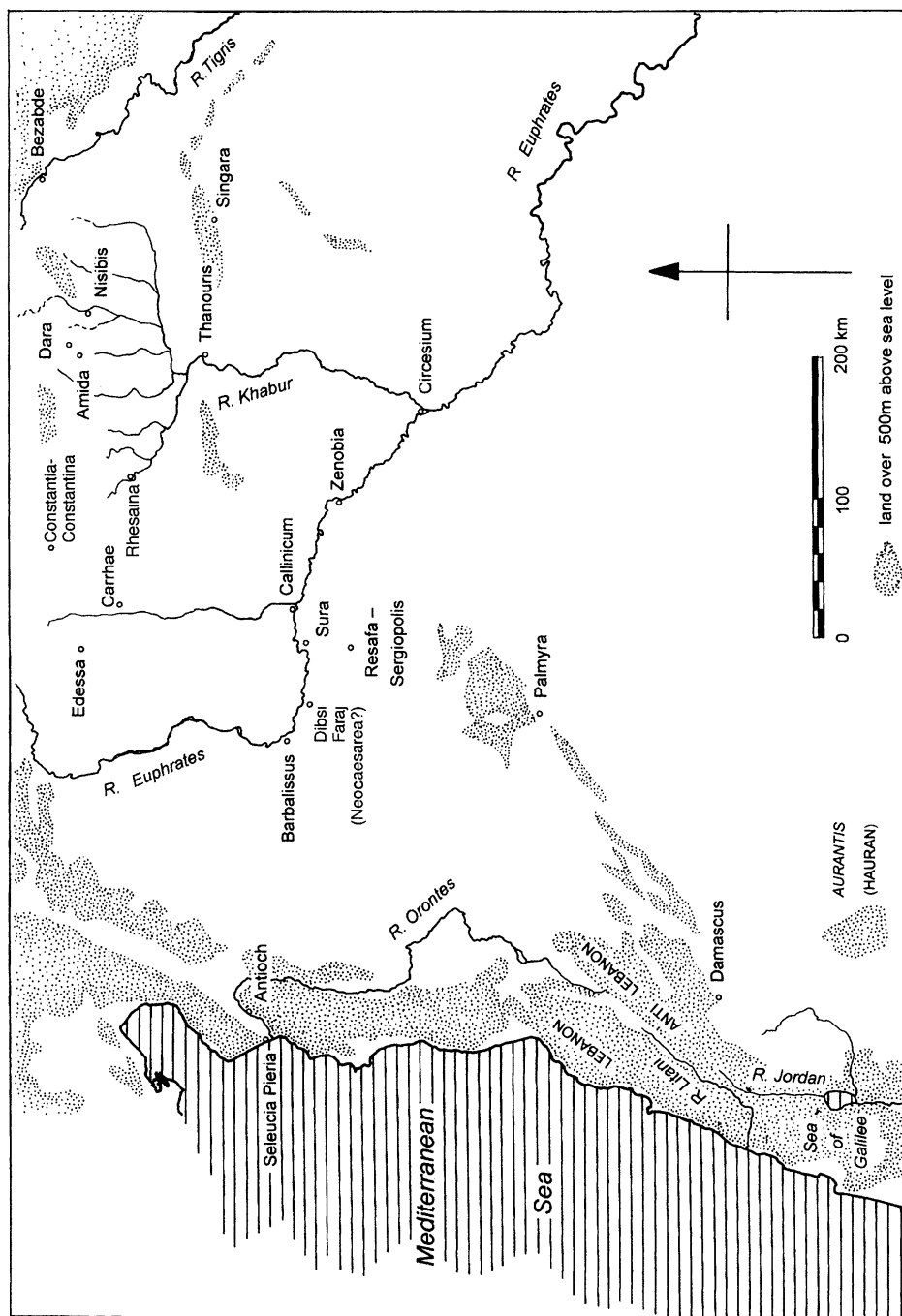


Fig. 9. Sites discussed in chapter 2 and appendix B

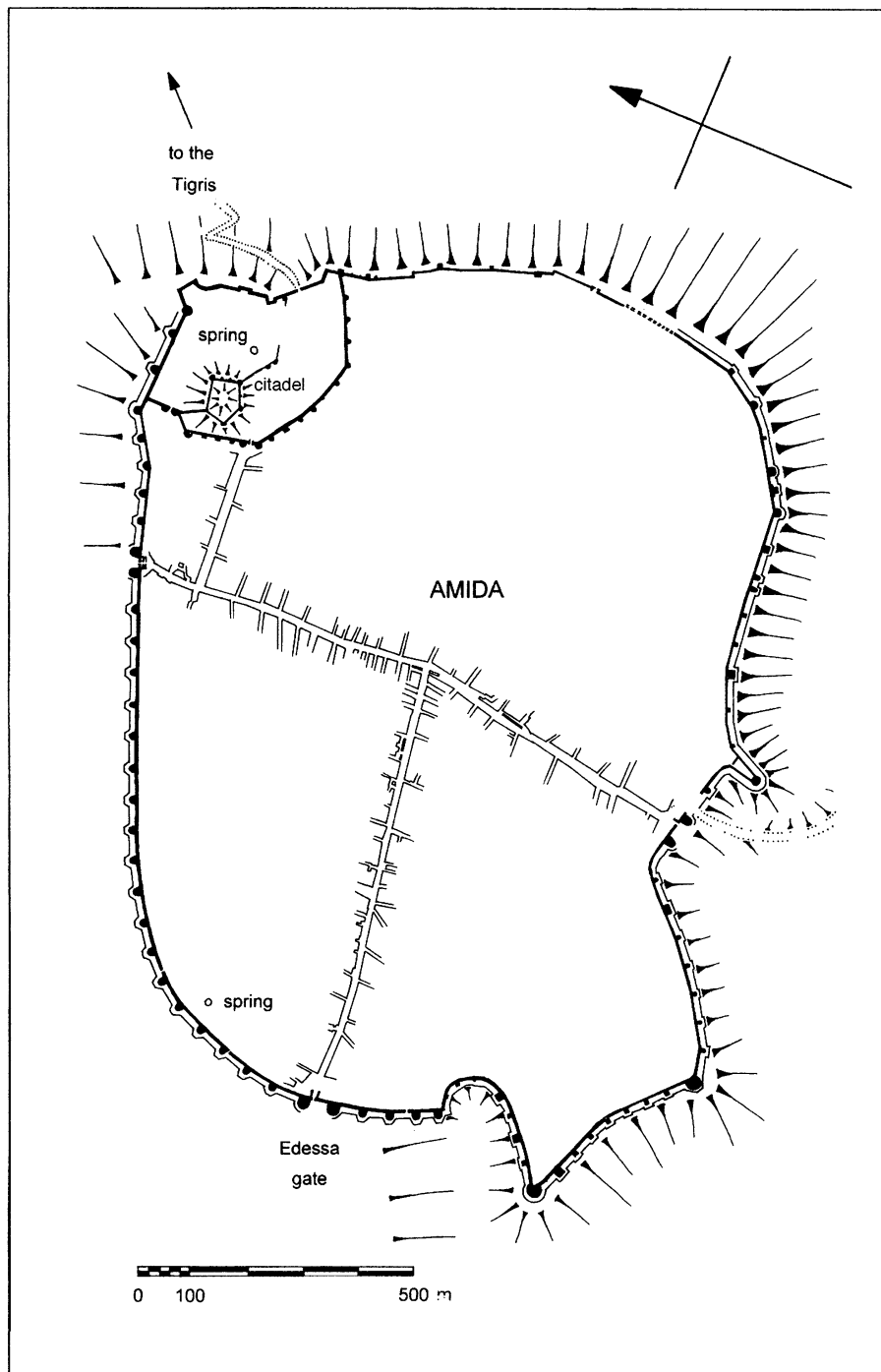


Fig. 10. Amida (Diyarbakir), showing the state of the defenses in 1932. Redrawn from A. Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques dans la Turquie orientale* (1940), fig. 69. (By permission of the Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes d'Istanbul.)

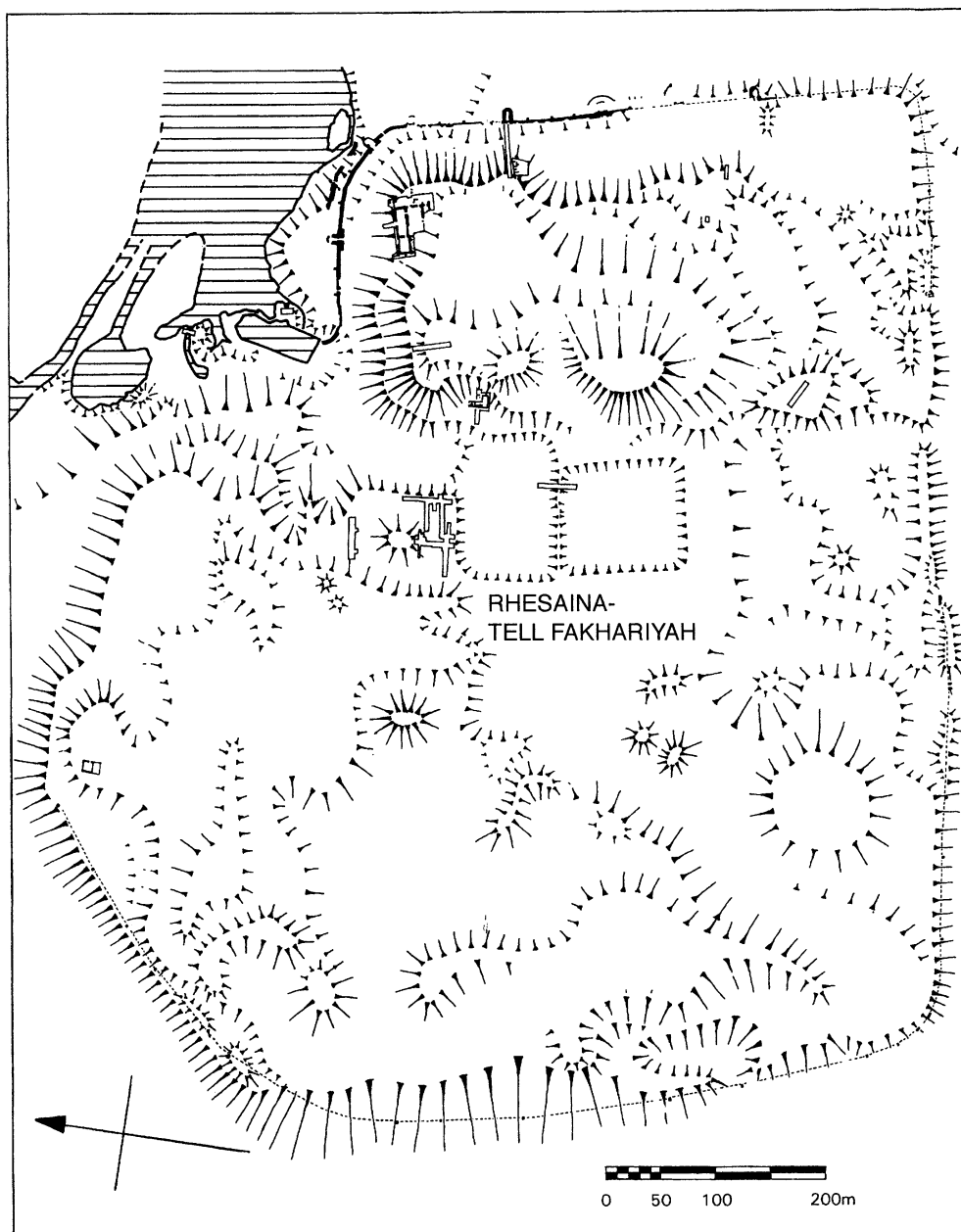


Fig. 11. Rhesaina-Tell Fakhariyah, showing part of the Roman fortifications. Redrawn from C.W. McEwan et al., *Soundings at Tell Fakhariyah*, University of Chicago Oriental Institute Publications, vol. 79 (1958), pl. 87. (By permission of the University of Chicago Press.)

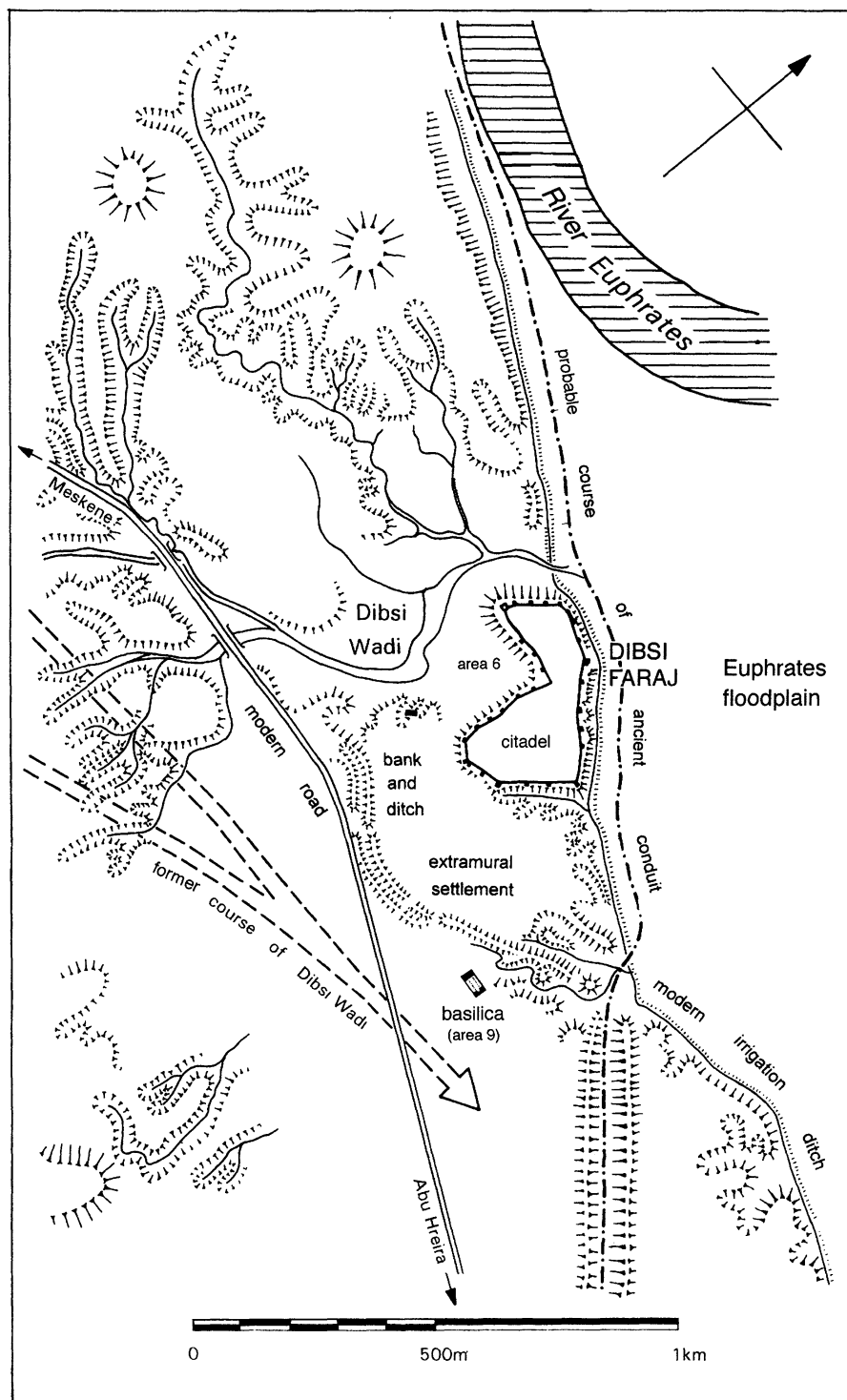


Fig. 12. Dibli Faraj (Neocaesarea?) showing outer bank and ditch defenses. Redrawn from R.P. Harper, "Excavations at Dibli-Faraj, Northern Syria, 1972–1974: A Preliminary Note on the Site and Its Monuments," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 29 (1975): fig. F. (By permission of Dumbarton Oaks.)

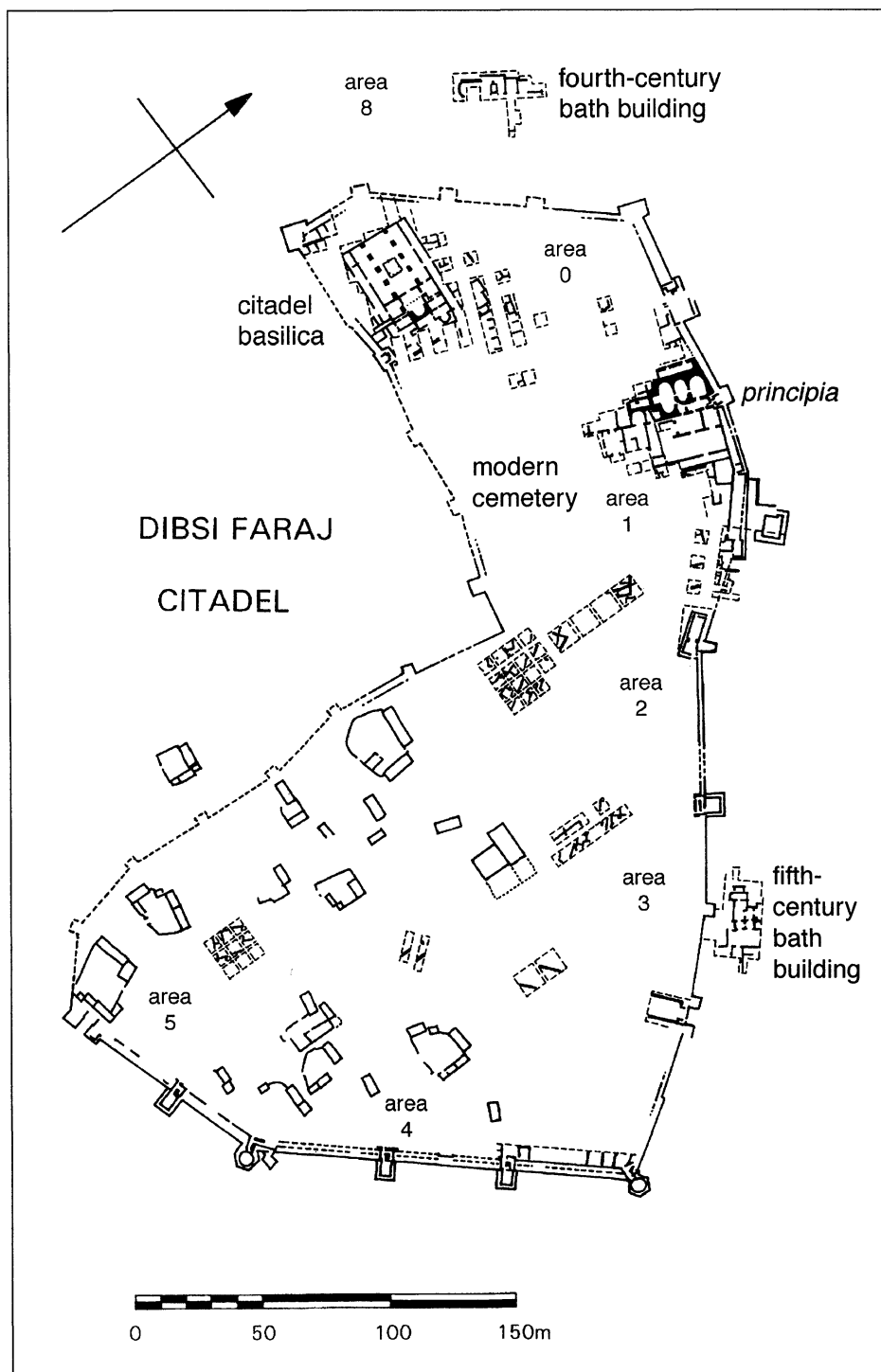


Fig. 13. Dibsi Faraj (Neocaesarea?), citadel area. Redrawn from R.A. Harper, "Excavations at Dibsi-Faraj, Northern Syria, 1972-1974: A Preliminary Note on the Site and Its Monuments," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 29 (1975): fig. B. (By permission of Dumbarton Oaks.)

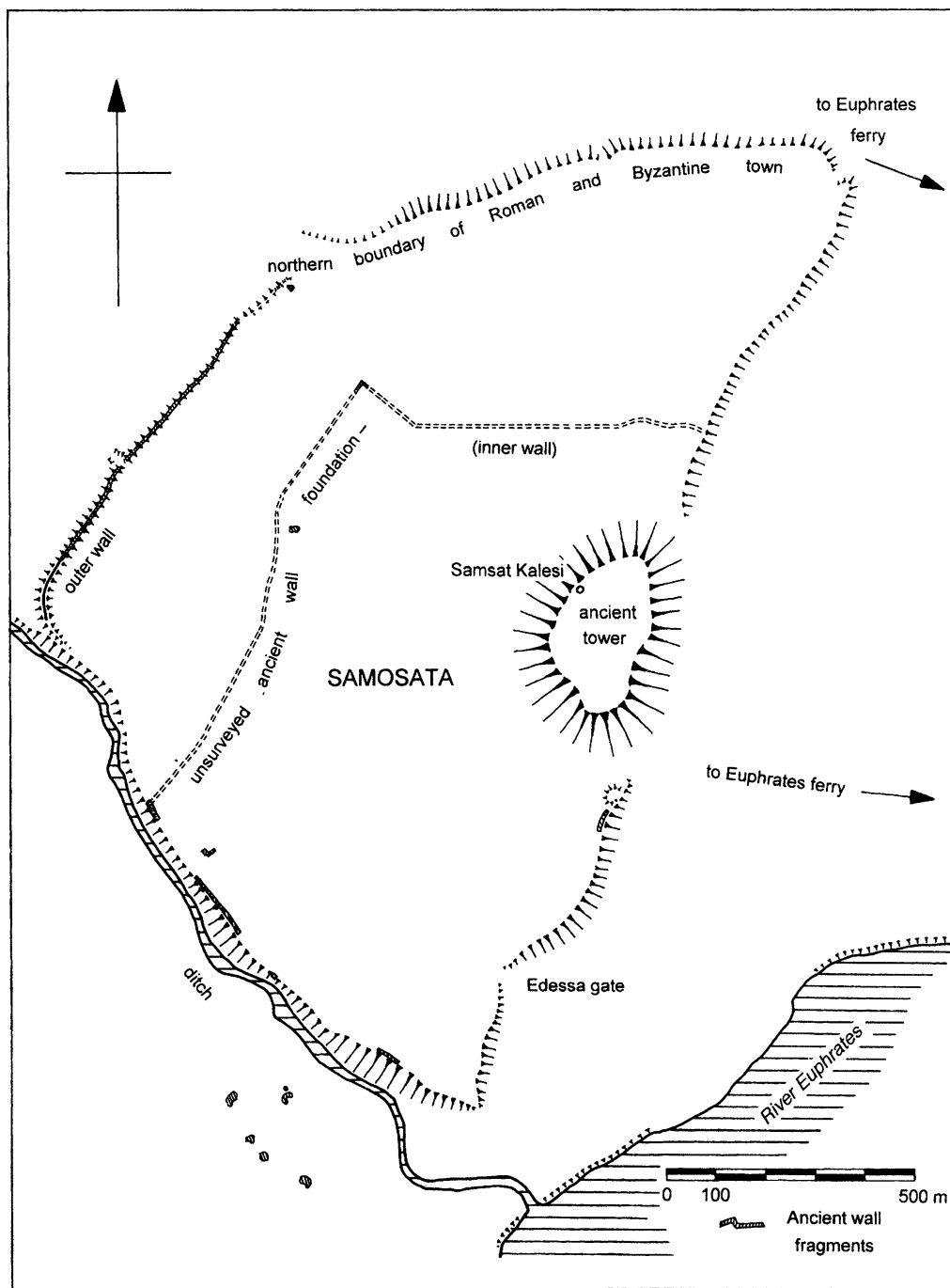
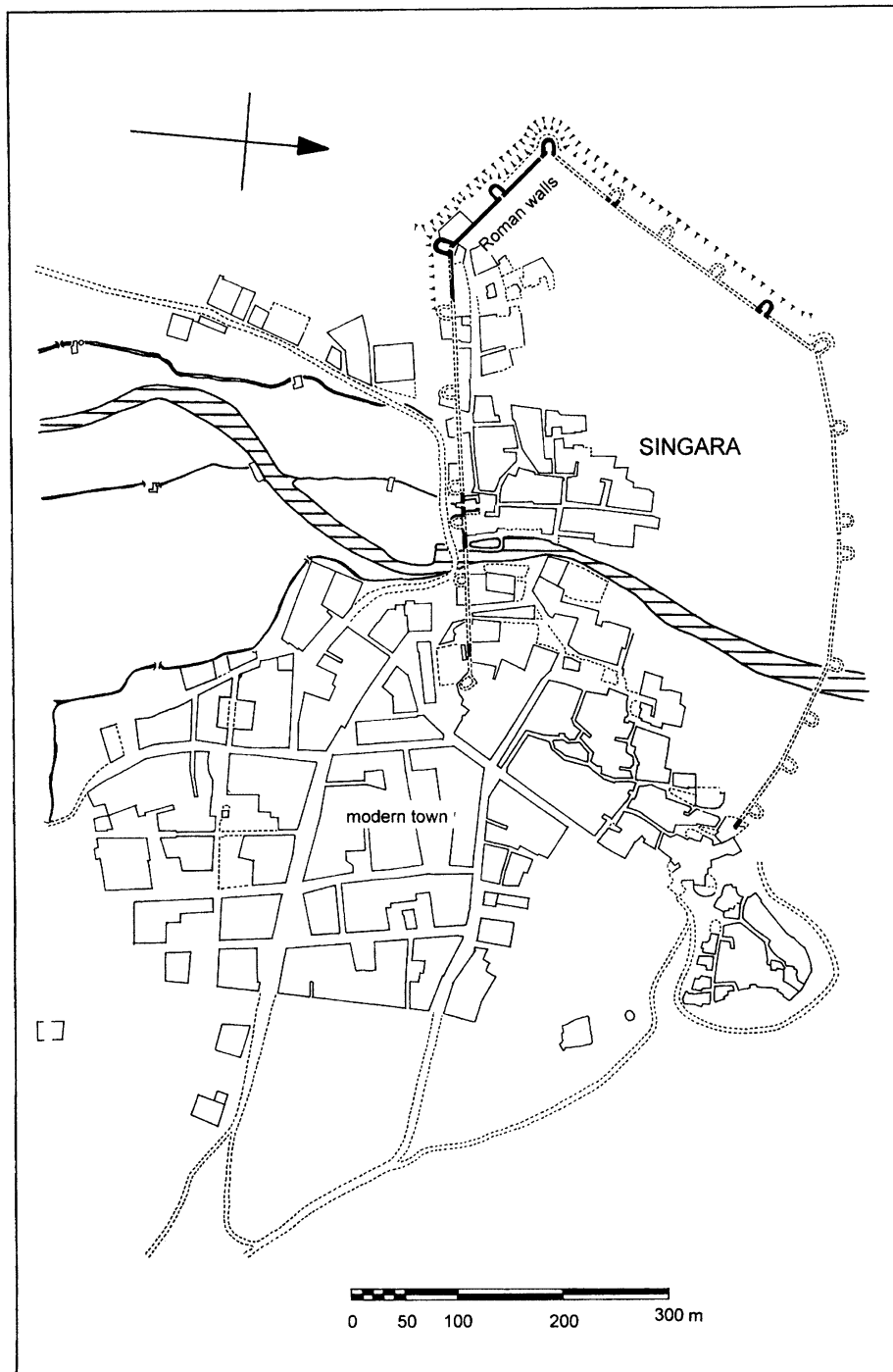


Fig. 14. Samosata (Samsat). Adapted from the preliminary survey plan of Samosata citadel mound and ancient fortification walls, sponsored by the National Geographic Society, survey by Sabri Gunec, Theresa Goell, Carl Anthony, and Ergun Uytun 1967–1968 (revised for publication by National Geographic Society 1974). Original published as T. Goell, “Samosata Archaeological Excavations, Turkey, 1967,” In *National Geographic Society Research Reports*, 1967 (1974), fig. 2.



**Fig. 15.** Singara (Beled Sinjar), showing Roman defenses. Redrawn from D. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq* (1968), fig. 8. (Copyright © The British Academy, 1968. Reproduced by permission of the British Academy.)

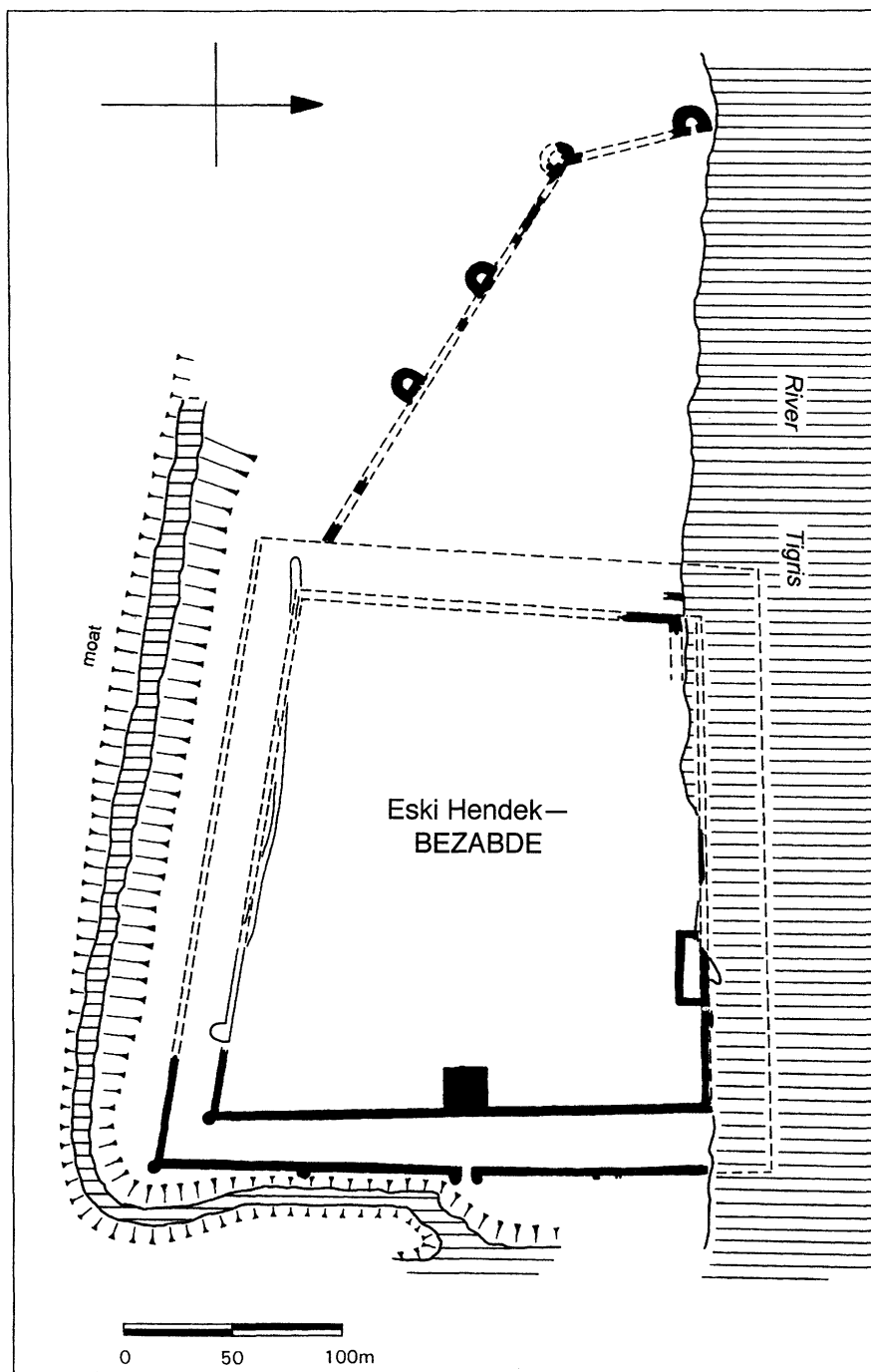


Fig. 16. Bezabde (Eski Hendek). Redrawn from G. Algaze, "A New Frontier: First Results of the Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project, 1988," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 48 (1989): fig. 11. (By permission of the University of Chicago Press.)

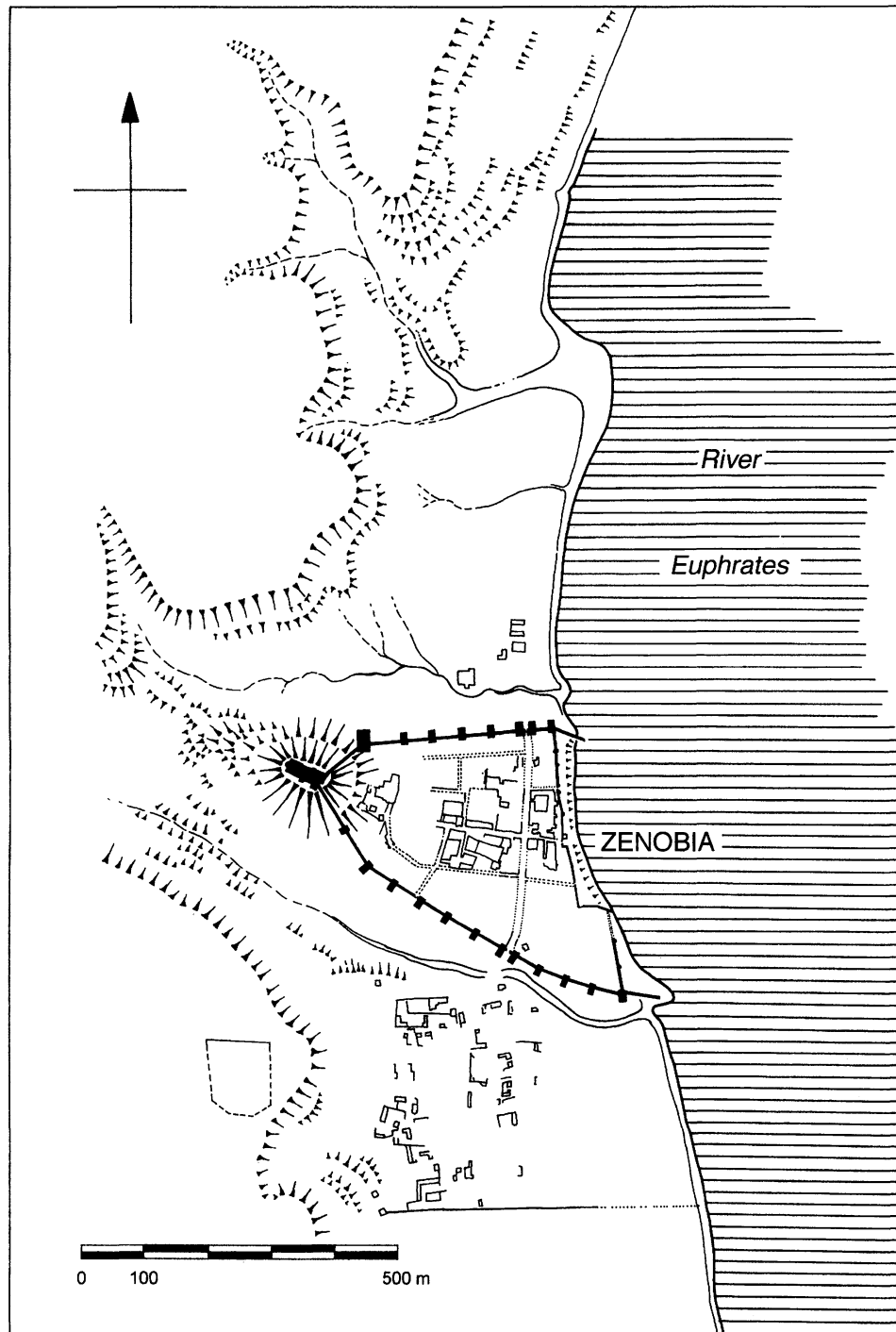


Fig. 17. Zenobia, showing fortifications and extramural settlement to south. Redrawn from J. Lauffary, *Halabiyya-Zenobia: Place forte du limes oriental et la haute-Mesopotamie au VI siècle*, vol. 1 (1983), fig. 2.

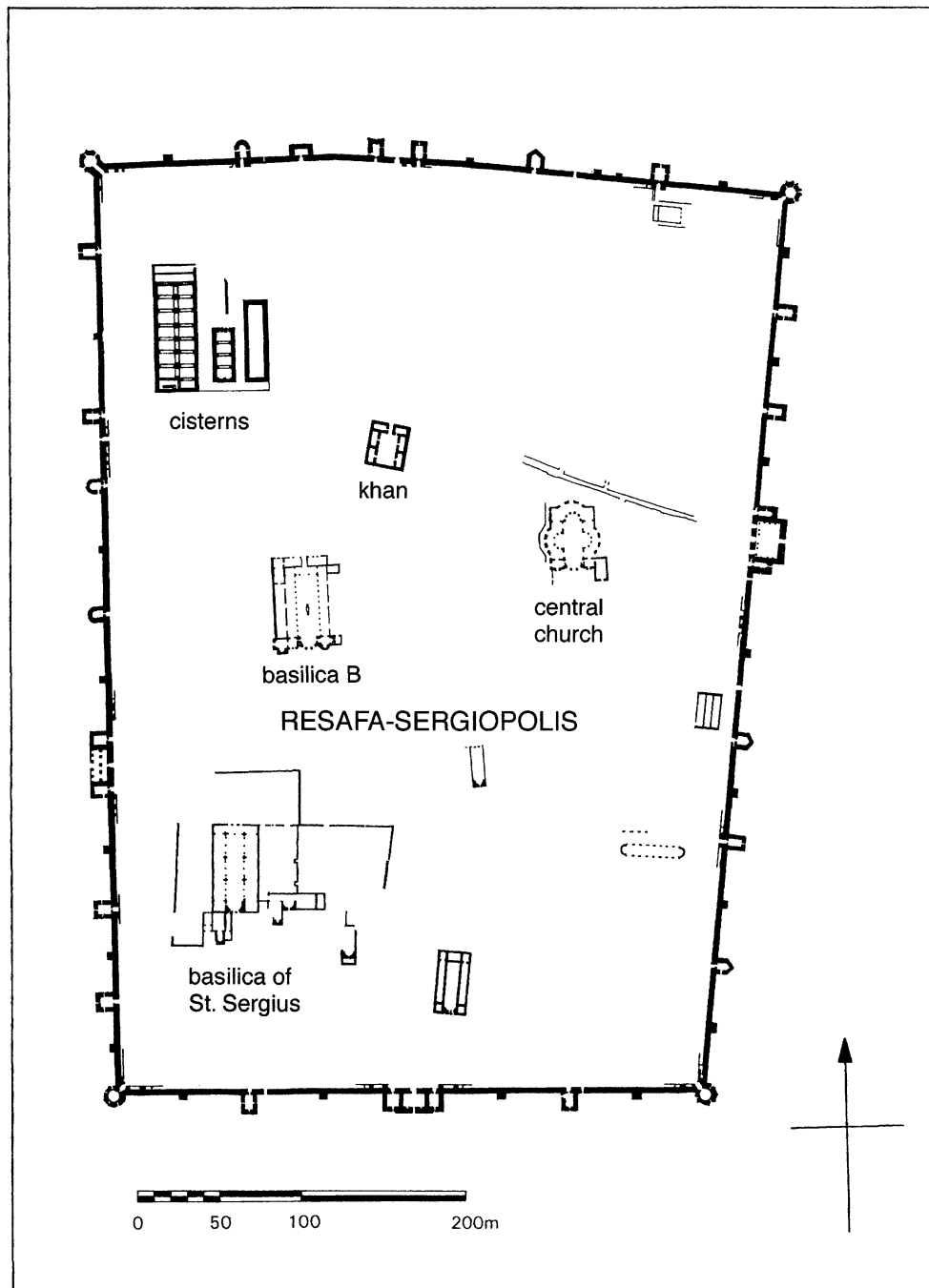


Fig. 18. Resafa-Sergiopolis. Redrawn from W. Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer von Resafa in Syrien*, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Denkmäler antiker Architektur, vol. 11 (1976), plan 3. (By permission of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.)

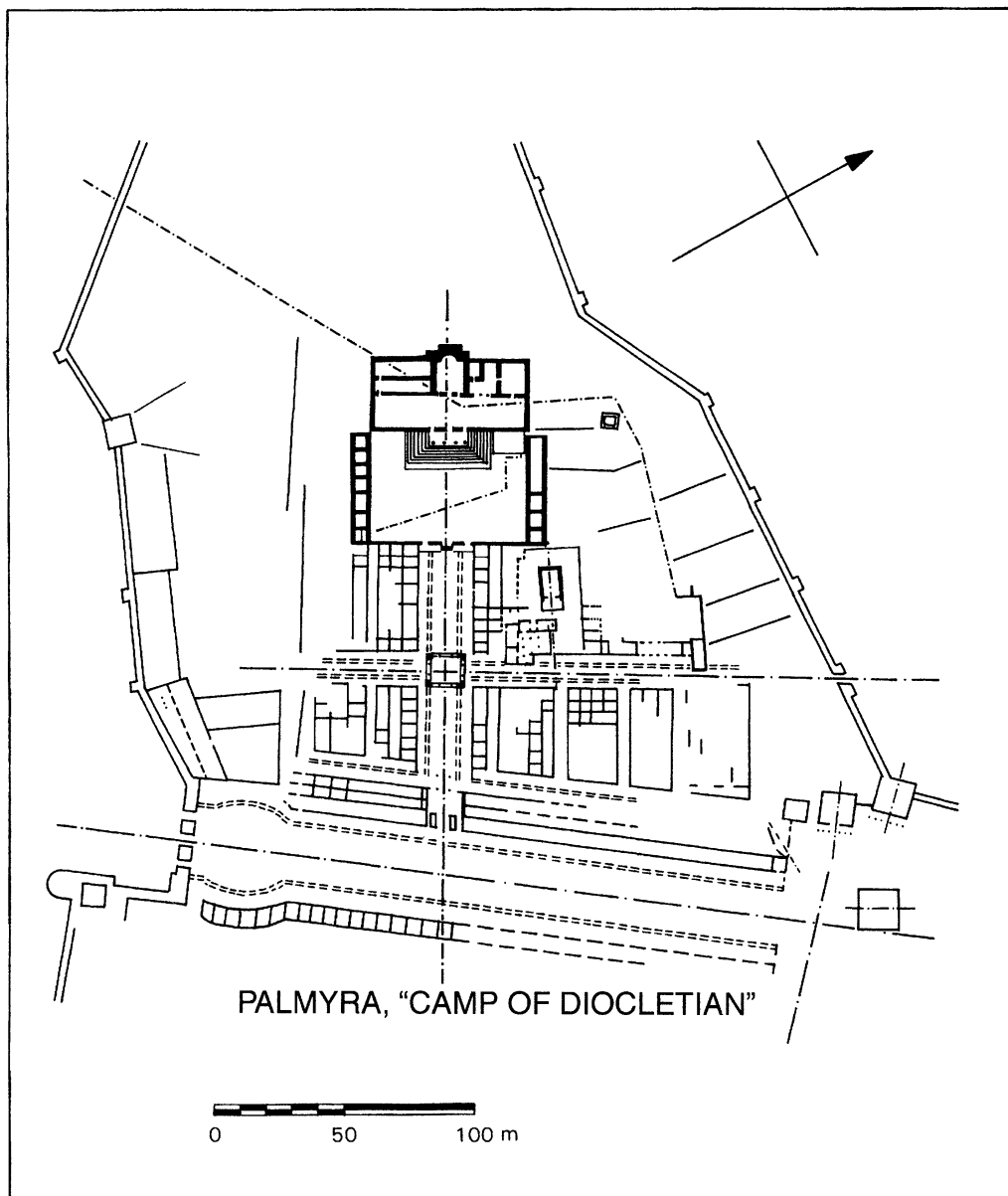


Fig. 19. Palmyra, "Camp of Diocletian." Redrawn from M. Gawlikowski, ed., *Palmyre*, vol. 8, *Les Principia de Dioclétien, "Temple des Enseignes"* (1984), plan 1, adapted with changes supplied by M. Gawlikowski. (By permission of M. Gawlikowski and Polish Scientific Publishers PWN.)



PART 2

**The Roman Army and Civilians in  
Syria and Mesopotamia:  
Formal and Informal Interaction**



## CHAPTER 3

# Formal Interaction: The Roman Army as Agent of Imperial Control

Examination of the geographical and topographical situation of the Roman army in Syria and Mesopotamia in part 1 revealed the importance of cities as military bases over more than six centuries. However, with the exception of Dura-Europos, purely archaeological evidence from these cities does not provide a detailed picture of the interaction of troops with their inhabitants. Such a picture requires combination of archaeology and historical evidence regarding specific social and economic issues to examine the behavior of the army in cities and rural territories.<sup>1</sup> Physical proximity does not necessarily mean close relations in social, cultural, and economic terms, but it does imply interaction of some kind.

Ultimately the Roman army was the occupying force of an imperial power, and a primary function of the army was the control of conquered territory. Hence the casual military brutality toward civilians depicted by Apuleius and Juvenal probably was not literary hyperbole but a typical experience for many inhabitants of the empire.<sup>2</sup> Any study of the relationship between civilians and soldiers must examine the impact of the army in the area of control, from military interference in the political life of communities to the detailed nature of policing, and this is one theme of this chapter. It includes the general behavior of soldiers toward civilians and the legal position of soldiers relative to civilians. A second theme is the immediate demands made by soldiers on the populations of cities and other civilian settlements, requisitions, and liturgies, such as compulsory

1. Some aspects of control (policing, tax collecting, and judicial activities) are discussed by R.W. Davies, "The Daily Life of the Roman Soldier," *ANRW* II.1 (1974): 299–338. R. MacMullen, in *Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire* (1963), and R.M. Price, in "The Role of Military Men in Syria and Egypt from Constantine to Theodosius II" (D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1973), discuss some aspects of the interaction of soldiers and civilians in the later empire.

2. Apuleius *Met.* 9.39–42; Juvenal *Sat.* 16.

billeting. Their direct impact on civilian communities is also considered, while wider issues, such as taxation and army supply, are dealt with in the context of the regional economy in part 3.

The subjects just listed relate to the soldiers' functions and status as soldiers, their official duties, and the privileges they derived from their relationship to imperial power. Other questions relate to their social and cultural position vis-à-vis civilians in the province and ask, broadly, to what degree the soldiers were related to or separate from civilian populations by way of ethnic, social, or cultural ties. It requires study of the recruitment and origin of soldiers, their religious practices, their language use, the processes of family formation, and the position of veterans in society. These are the subject of chapter 4.

### Military Authority and Municipal Government

An obvious question concerning communities with a large military presence is to what degree the military establishment interfered with day-to-day functioning of municipal authorities. Mostly cities were allowed to govern themselves. The main functions of the few Roman officials in the provinces were the dispensation of justice and the maintenance of order.<sup>3</sup> Conversely, what evidence exists suggests that cities were reluctant to seek the intervention or arbitration of Roman officials stationed in their province, in contrast to their attitude toward the emperor, who was the recipient of regular embassies and petitions, presumably because greater distance made him less of a threat to civic autonomy.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, governors did intervene in civic politics occasionally, particularly when public order was threatened. The governor of Bithynia-Pontus convened meetings of the assembly at Prusa at a time of factional conflict in A.D. 101/2,<sup>5</sup> the proconsul of Asia engaged in strikebreaking at Ephesus in the second century A.D.,<sup>6</sup> and the legate of Galatia enforced grain prices and

3. See *Digest* 1.18.13.pr (Ulpian *De off. procos.* 7) on public order, 1.16.7.2 (Ulpian *De off. procos.* 2) on justice. The important role of military authorities in administering justice is discussed later in this chapter.

4. On the desirability of avoiding the intervention of Roman authorities: see Plutarch *Praec. Ger. Reip.* 814c–f, 815a–c; Dio Chrysostom 38.36–37, 43.6, 46.14.

5. See Dio Chrysostom 45.15, 48.1, 48.15.

6. See *Inschriften in Ephesos* 215. See W.H. Buckler, "Labour Disputes in Asia," in *Anatolian Studies Presented to Sir William Mitchell Ramsay*, ed. W.H. Buckler and W.M. Calder (1923), 30–33.

declaration of grain stocks at time of food crisis in Antioch in Pisidia in A.D. 93.<sup>7</sup>

In attempting to apply these general principles of Roman government to the provinces of Syria and Mesopotamia, one encounters problems of evidence. Nearly all our literary and documentary sources for Roman provincial administration in the east (leaving aside Egypt, which may have been atypical) come from nonmilitary provinces of Asia, particularly Bithynia-Pontus in the time of Dio Chrysostom and Pliny. We have little idea of how provinces with large military garrisons were governed in detail. In a major frontier province like Syria, the governor was also a military commander, and public order in the broadest sense (including the defense of the province against raiders as well as Parthian and Sassanian armies) may have required more frequent intervention in the political lives of the cities. It is possible that other military commanders, such as legionary *legati*, *praepositi*, and the *dux ripae* occasionally undertook executive functions. For example, two career inscriptions of Ti. Severus from Ankara record that as legate of *legio IIII Scythica* he took charge of Syria while the governor, Publicius Marcellus, was away dealing with the Bar-Kochva revolt in Judaea in A.D. 132.<sup>8</sup> However, there is no evidence for direct intervention by military authorities in the relatively few inscriptions from such cities as early and middle imperial Antioch and Apamea, with well-developed civic institutions, or from areas closer to the frontiers. Even Dura-Europos, in a frontier region, near the peak of Roman military occupation, shows no sign of direct military government and reveals the retention of Greco-Macedonian political institutions.<sup>9</sup> It

7. See AE 1925, 126. Grain shortages often gave rise to civic unrest, hence the governor was concerned in his role as guardian of public order.

8. IGRR III, 174, 12–16; 175, 7–9. For more on this, see Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 1:518–19, 542–49; R. Syme, “Journeys of Hadrian,” in *Roman Papers*, vol. 6, ed. E. Birley (1991), 346–57, at 353–54. For the governor, C. Quinctius Certus Publicius Marcellus, see AE 1934, 231; R. Syme, “People in Pliny,” in *Roman Papers*, vol. 2, ed. E. Badian (1979) 694–723, at 721.

9. The inscriptions are Cumont, *Fouilles*, 404–9, a dedication to Artemis in her temple by “colonists, councillors, and priests” (several have *Aurelius* names, so probably it dates to after A.D. 211); *Dura* 2, 148–151, inscription b, a dedication to Septimius Lusias, *strategus* *Dur(ae)* by soldiers, probably Severan; *Dura* 3, 51–52, D149, a dedication to Julia Domna by the “council of the people of Aurelia Antoniniana Europos.” Building H was identified as the *curia* of the city because of the last inscription and a graffito on a seat reading “Zoilos councillor of Dura” (*Dura* 3, 31). Relevant papyri are *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 141–42, no. 27, lines 5–7 (A.D. 225–40); 166–171, no. 32, verso, line 4 (A.D. 254); 173–74, no. 38, line 5 (third century A.D.), βουλευταί; 126–33, no. 25, lines 34–35 (A.D. 180), “*strategos* and *epistates* of the city.” J. Johnson suggested (*Dura* 2, 160–61) that the

seems likely that the governors of Syria and Mesopotamia, who were military commanders, and other senior military officers could and did intervene in the government of cities for reasons of public order and that occasions requiring such intervention were more common in frontier areas than in Asia or Bithynia-Pontus. However, there is little direct evidence for this in the early and high empire.

The importance of maintaining good relationships with military officers is shown by the way in which communities honored them as benefactors in inscriptions. In two inscriptions from the late second century, Rusticus, son of Sopator, of the village of Phaena, and the people of his community honored Petusius Eudemus, a centurion of *legio XVI Flavia Firma*, as “friend and benefactor.”<sup>10</sup> Another inscription, from Aere, describes how a centurion of a legion (erased, probably *III Gallica*), as “benefactor and founder of the people of Aere,” constructed an enclosure and *tychaeum*.<sup>11</sup> There is no indication of veteran status, and probably he was a centurion commanding a policing detachment, as occurred elsewhere in southern Syria. A dedication from the late second century to C. Vibius Celer by the βουλή and δημός (“council” and “assembly”) of Palmyra suggests involvement of a serving Roman officer in municipal politics. He is described as commander of a cavalry *ala* but also as “citizen and councillor,” honored “on account of his status and goodwill.”<sup>12</sup> There is no evidence he was a veteran, and his name suggests a Roman rather than a Palmyrene, probably the garrison commander. It is remarkable that he held both the citizenship and membership of a governing body of that city, and this suggests the potential power of army officers in the communities of southern Syria. Such dedications come from rural areas and may indicate that military officers of middle and lower ranks there were able to exercise more independent power away from Roman central authority. Perhaps they were treated with more formal respect than individuals of similar rank elsewhere. The centurions may have exercised judicial and policing powers, as is discussed later in this chapter.

A painted *tabula ansata* from the Palmyrene gate at Dura-Europos provides more evidence of military officers as benefactors and recipients of honors. This has a dedication to the *str(ategus) Dur(ae)*, a civilian

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apparent disappearance from Dura of the title ἐπιστάτης in the third century implies a shift of police/public-order powers to Roman authorities, but there is little evidence.

10. IGRR III, 1121–22.

11. Ibid., 1128.

12. Seyrig, “Textes relatif à la garnison romaine de Palmyre,” 158–59, no. 1.

magistrate, and his family by *beneficarii* and *decuriones* of an unnamed cohort, apparently the reciprocal of the usual dedications from civilians to soldiers. The editor suggests that the *tabula ansata* was associated with fragmentary frescoes in the guardroom of the gate and that the latter were a gift from the στρατηγός to the troops, perhaps another bid by a civilian official to maintain the goodwill of the soldiers.<sup>13</sup>

In the later empire, the scale of imperial administration increased throughout the empire, and intervention by imperial officials in municipal government was commonplace.<sup>14</sup> The best evidence comes from Libanius' accounts of civic life in Antioch in the second half of the fourth century A.D.,<sup>15</sup> although Antioch may have been exceptional because of the number of senior officials there. Much intervention was by officials without a specifically military role. For example, the governors (the Greek term is ἄρχων) against whom Libanius leveled accusations of interfering in curial government, abusing the *boule* and the *demos*, and unfairly exploiting the *corvée* labor of local peasants were civilian *consulares*, the senior military commands by this time having been separated from civilian administration and placed in the hands of specialized *magistri militum* and *duces*.<sup>16</sup> When emperors made laws defining those liable for curial duties, they did not do so in a specifically military capacity.<sup>17</sup> Julian fixed grain prices in Antioch in response to food shortages in A.D. 362, and his action led to direct conflict with the civic authorities.<sup>18</sup> This action related to the emperor's role as military commander in some respects, since he was in Antioch preparing for a campaign; the presence of troops undoubtedly exacerbated the food crisis, and ultimately the issue was one of public order. However, price-fixing of grain was a standard activity of governors in "civilian" provinces in the early and high empire too.

Clearer evidence for the involvement of military officials in the government of Antioch comes in Libanius' *Oration 47, De patrociniis*. In this

13. *Dura* 2, 148–51, b and fig. 23; 160.

14. Libanius (*Or.* 2 passim, e.g.) contrasts the large number of imperial officials in Antioch in the later fourth century with the attenuated size of the curial class available to undertake civic duties.

15. The evidence of Libanius is discussed in detail by Harmand as editor of *Libanius: Discours sur les patronages* (1955) and in J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (1972).

16. Libanius *Or.* 33 passim (e.g., 33.13), 15.74, 50 passim.

17. Constantius and Julian are examples; see Libanius *Or.* 18.147–48.

18. See Libanius *Or.* 18.195–96; Julian *Misopogon* 350A.

speech, Libanius complains that soldiers quartered in villages in the territory of Antioch were paid in cash or kind by the villagers to defend them. The villagers were then free to harass their neighbors without danger of retaliation. More directly related to interference in municipal government is the charge that villages “of many owners,” probably of small independent landowners, were able to use soldiers to drive off civic tax collectors, forcing councillors of Antioch responsible for the collection of taxes to pay the taxes themselves or be flogged. This, claimed Libanius, was one of the factors contributing to the decline of the Antiochene curial class, whose members were forced to sell property to pay tax liabilities.<sup>19</sup> Villages with a single landlord, such as that occupied by Libanius’ Jewish tenants, also employed soldiers and refused to pay rent, hence ruining their curial landlords. They were protected from legal action by the patronage of senior military officers in Antioch itself.<sup>20</sup> It is clear from Libanius’ account that this activity was sponsored by senior officials, such as the στρατηγός, who lived in the city. Liebeschuetz suggests he was the *magister militum per orientem*.<sup>21</sup> Peter Brown has shown that this military patronage related to a general rise in the importance of patrons outside the traditional secular power structure.<sup>22</sup> Other examples of military officers intervening in the government of late Roman Antioch are Hellebichus, the στρατηγός (probably the *magister militum per orientem* again) appointed as one of the investigators of the “Riot of the Statues” in A.D. 387,<sup>23</sup> and the ἄρχων τῶν ἐθνῶν, probably the *comes orientis*, who intervened with troops in that riot.<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps late imperial Antioch was exceptional because of its concentration of officials, but laws enacted in the fourth century forbidding military officers from intervention in the affairs of *curiales* suggest that such interference was a general problem.<sup>25</sup> The fortress character of many cities in the region and the presence of such senior officials as the *magister*

19. Libanius *Or.* 47.7–10.

20. See *ibid.*, 47.11–15.

21. *Ibid.*, 47.13; Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, 115–16.

22. P. Brown, “The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity,” in *Society and the Holy* (1982), 103–52, at 115–20; “Town, Village, and Holy Man: The Case of Syria,” in *ibid.*, 153–65, at 157–60.

23. See Libanius *Or.* 21.7, 22 *passim*, 23.26.

24. See *ibid.*, 19.36. Cf. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, 110–11, for discussion of the exact functions of the *comes orientis*.

25. *CJ* 1.29.1 (A.D. 386–87); *C.Th.* 12.1.128 (A.D. 392). The later goes on to forbid physical ill-treatment, so it may relate to the legal status of *curiales* more than to political intervention.

*militem* and the *duces* probably ensured that such intervention was common, although even a fortress city like Nisibis had civilian institutions of government.<sup>26</sup> There is little hard evidence beyond that from Antioch, but probably that paucity is mostly due to the focus of surviving sources.

### The Judicial Functions of Military Officers

Ulpian considered the administration of justice to be an important function of a governor, and Roman officials spent much of their time administering justice at *conventus*, or assize centers.<sup>27</sup> Governors of Syria in the Principate were also military commanders, so functions of judge and military officer were combined in one individual. While the position of *legatus Augusti* in Syria was reserved for individuals of distinction,<sup>28</sup> this distinction was generally political rather than specifically military, and at least one (Claudian) governor of Syria, C. Cassius Longinus, was particularly famed for his legal abilities.<sup>29</sup> Governors could delegate judicial powers to *legati* of their own and, in a role analogous to that of the urban praetor at Rome, appoint *iudices dati* to judge specific cases.<sup>30</sup> Military officers, from legionary legates to centurions, were obvious choices, and we might expect to find military officers involved in the judicial process.

Some evidence for officials involved in legal activities in Syria and Mesopotamia in the mid-third century A.D. is provided by papyri from the middle Euphrates and specifically from Dura-Europos. From the former it is clear that the governor of Coele Syria had ultimate judicial responsibility for the area but that other officials also exercised some authority. These officials included Marcellus, διέπων τὰ μέρη τῆς ἡγεμονίας [wielding, or deputizing in, shares of government]. One petition was

26. Ammianus Marcellinus 25.9.2 refers to the *ordo* (council) of Nisibis.

27. *Digest* 1.16.7.2 (Ulpian *De off. procos.* 2). A good account of the judicial role of governors is given by G.P. Burton in "Proconsuls, Assizes, and the Administration of Justice under the Empire," *JRS* 65 (1975): 92–106. Papyri of the Babatha archive (*P.Yadin* 13, 25, 26; 120s A.D.) show that a range of minor disputes were taken to the governor of Arabia while he was conducting assizes at Petra and Rabbath.

28. See Tac. *Agricola* 46.

29. See J.B. Campbell, "Who Were the *Viri Militares*?" *JRS* 65 (1975): 11–31, for discussion of the qualifications of governors of Syria. The two most successful generals who served in Syria, Corbulo and Vespasian, were appointed after conflicts had broken out and were not necessarily typical appointees. Tacitus (*Ann.* 12.12) wrote of C. Cassius Longinus that *ea tempestate Cassius ceteros praeminebat peritia legum* [at that time Cassius stood out from all others in his experience in the law].

30. See *Digest* 1.16.6.1–2 (Ulpian *De off. procos.* 1) on the appointment of *legati*.

addressed to him, and the editors suggest he was the vice-governor, with judicial powers delegated by the governor.<sup>31</sup>

Another recipient of a petition was Julius Priscus. This former praetorian prefect, the brother of Philip the Arab, was the prefect of Mesopotamia (διασημότατος ἑπαρχος Μεσοπαταμίας) and was described as διέπων τὴν ὑπατείαν (perhaps, “wielding consular power”). The editors note that it would not have been strictly within the competence of Julius Priscus as prefect of Mesopotamia to deal with legal problems arising at the village of Beth Phrouria, which, like Dura-Europos, lay within the province of Coele Syria. They suggest that he dealt with the matter in his capacity as διέπων τὴν ὑπατείαν, probably interim governor of Coele Syria.<sup>32</sup> Another equestrian official with unusual power was Pomponius Laetianus, also described as διέπων τὴν ὑπατείαν and μείζων δικαστής [judge with greater powers].<sup>33</sup>

Claudius Ariston, a procurator, also appears in two documents regarding judicial proceedings. The dispute described in one document took place on an imperial estate, and the editors suggest that this was why he became involved. The other document shows that he had a wider judicial function, exercised from the assize center of Appadana.<sup>34</sup> While finance was the primary area of responsibility for a procurator in the early Principate, they sometimes exercised wider powers in later centuries.<sup>35</sup>

Julius Priscus and Pomponius Laetianus, as interim governors, held military powers. Military commands normally were not undertaken by procurators, although they could be in exceptional circumstances,<sup>36</sup> and the powers of Claudius Ariston known from the papyri were in themselves exceptional.

Another senior official from the middle Euphrates who may have carried out judicial duties was the *dux ripae* at Dura-Europos. *Dipinti* from his “palace” refer to him as ἄγνός καὶ δίκαιος [pious and just], a formula that the editors note was a common formula “peculiarly appropriate, but by no means restricted, to judges.” The editors continue, “and

31. *P.Euphr.* 2 (A.D. 244–50?).

32. *P.Euphr.* 1 (A.D. 245). See Potter, *Prophecy and History*, 245 n. 116, for Priscus’ career.

33. *P.Euphr.* 3–4 (A.D. 252–56).

34. *P.Euphr.* 2; Feissel and Gasco, “Documents” (1989), 556f., nos. 1–2.

35. See P.A. Brunt, “Procuratorial Jurisdiction,” *Latomus* 25 (1965): 451–89.

36. See Josephus *BJ* 2.39–50. After the death of Herod, the governor of Syria, P. Quinctilius Varus, left a legion at Jerusalem with the procurator Sabinus, who commanded the troops when unrest broke out.

we may suppose the *dux* to have exercised judicial functions at Dura, directly or through officers of the Dura garrison.”<sup>37</sup> The (probably Hadrianic) tax law from Palmyra refers to arbitration between *publicani* and private individuals by someone “stationed at Palmyra,” and Seyrig suggests that this might be the garrison commander, whose influence in municipal affairs may be attested in the dedication to C. Vibius Celer discussed earlier.<sup>38</sup> Whether this indicates a general grant of judicial power or something akin to the supervision of markets by army officers is unclear.

Of more obvious and direct relevance to the judicial role of army officers is the fact that a petition from the middle Euphrates was addressed to the prefect Julius Proculus, described as *praepositus praetenturae*, an officer in a military camp.<sup>39</sup> The petitioner complains of violence by a neighbor and requests the *praepositus* to compel the offender to appear before Pomponius Laetianus. The *praepositus* seems to act as an intermediary or even a police officer rather than as judge in this case, and it is interesting to compare this document with others referring to the prefect of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* at Dura-Europos. The documents from Dura are three papyri from the “archive” of material from the Temple of Azzanathkona, all of which were signed by Laronius Secundianus, prefect of that unit.<sup>40</sup> Only the first preserves a date, A.D. 235, about two decades before the Pomponius Laetianus document. This first Laronius Secundianus document is in Latin and is a fragmentary transcript of the prefect’s investigation of a dispute over a contract of sale. Secundianus gave a verdict (*sententia*) and signed the document. The second document, in Greek, is similar and involves a dispute over the division of some property. The third document is very fragmentary, and only part of the preserved tribune’s signature suggests it is similar. These are important because they show a middle-ranking Roman army officer acting as the ultimate judge in legal disputes between civilians. All of these examples from the middle Euphrates postdate the *Constitutio Antoniniana* and may reflect an increasing need for officials to handle the cases of new Roman citizens. Hence they may not reflect the typical judicial role of military officers in the Principate.

37. *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 35–36 n. 24.

38. OGIS II, 629, lines 104–6; Seyrig, “Textes relatif à la garnison romaine de Palmyre,” 157.

39. *P.Euphr.* 3–4.

40. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 395–98, nos. 125–27.

The evidence regarding more junior military personnel acting as judges is less clear. It is apparent from Syria, Mesopotamia, Judaea, and Egypt that centurions acted as police officers, sometimes with troops under their command. The police functions of the army are discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Also, there is evidence that, in some circumstances, centurions acted as judges.<sup>41</sup> Campbell states that they were obvious choices for the governor of a province to select as *iudices dati* and that they might also arbitrate, make provisional judgments, and refer litigants to the governor at the *conventus* and hence take on a less formal judicial role.<sup>42</sup> In Juvenal's *Satire* 16.13–14 a centurion presides over a trial, but the dispute is between a soldier and a civilian in a military camp rather than between civilians. An inscription from Dalmatia refers to two centurions of *legio XI* as “appointed judges with the agreement of the provincial legate.”<sup>43</sup> Again, it is not certain that they judged exclusively civilian cases, but it is possible. There is no definite evidence that centurions acted as judges in Syria and Mesopotamia, but given their presence as police in some parts of the provinces, it is probable that they did, formally or otherwise.

Most evidence for military officers as judges in the later empire comes from the later fourth century A.D. Imperial rescripts forbid the involvement of soldiers in civilian judicial affairs, suggesting that such behavior was common but not sanctioned by formal legal procedures.<sup>44</sup> A letter of the prefect of Egypt, dated to A.D. 367–70, notes that civilians had been bringing cases against other civilians before military *praepositi* in order to gain some form of advantage in court.<sup>45</sup> The prefect states (lines 13–14), “the *praepositus* of the soldiers is no longer allowed power over civilians,” and it goes on to say (lines 17–22) that a civilian can appeal to a *praepositus* in a case involving a soldier, but not in a case involving another civilian.

Nevertheless, it is clear that military officers did exercise jurisdiction over civilians, at least through the fourth century. Ammianus, writing of

41. This whole issue is summarized effectively by J.B. Campbell in *The Emperor and the Roman Army, 31 B.C.–A.D. 235* (1984), app. 1, 431–35.

42. Ibid., 432. The importance of district centurions as arbitrators in Egypt is discussed in Alston, *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt*, 86–96.

43. *CIL* III, 9832.

44. The whole issue is discussed in MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian*, 62–69. The rescripts include *C.Th.* 1.7.2 (A.D. 393), 1.21.1 (A.D. 393), 2.1.2 (A.D. 355), and 2.1.9 (A.D. 397).

45. *P.Oxy.* 1101.

the eastern empire in general, claimed that judges sold the interests of the poor to soldiers.<sup>46</sup> It is not clear whether these judges accepted bribes to turn a blind eye to the forms of military patronage previously described or actually turned over the right to try cases to military officers as MacMullen implies.<sup>47</sup> The evidence of Libanius regarding Antioch suggests a takeover of judicial functions from municipal officers by Roman officials, including some with semimilitary positions, such as the *comes orientis*.<sup>48</sup> However, the clearest evidence of military officers intervening in the judicial system in the fourth century comes from Egypt, from the Abinnaeus archive. This archive contains papyrus documents of Flavius Abinnaeus, the *praepositus* and ἑπαρχος of the *ala V praelectorum*, which was based at Dionysias in Lower Egypt.<sup>49</sup> The documents date to the mid-fourth century A.D. Fourteen petitions are addressed to Abinnaeus, each asking him to take the petition before the *dux* to punish the criminals. Only one of these petitions involves a serving soldier, and two involve veterans,<sup>50</sup> so technically it seems that neither the *dux* nor Abinnaeus had any competence to judge. The crimes are diverse, from livestock theft and assault to an inheritance dispute. These petitions seem to have been an important part of Abinnaeus' job, whether legally sanctioned or otherwise. It seems likely that military officers in Syria and Mesopotamia undertook similar functions, particularly in frontier areas and fortress cities, where they were the only regular representatives of the central power.

Hence it seems that officers of the Roman army at all levels throughout the Principate and later empire engaged in activities that encroached on the prerogatives of civilian officials, both civic authorities and agents of the central government. The evidence specifically from Syria and Mesopotamia is limited. However, this is probably due to the lack of further source material comparable to Libanius' speeches and to the limited survival of relevant papyrus documents, rather than because such activities were uncommon. Even in peacetime the authority and influence of

46. Ammianus Marcellinus 30.4.2.

47. MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian*, 62.

48. See Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, 113. On this, see also Harmand, ed., *Libanius: Discours sur les patronages*, 153. Liebeschuetz (*Antioch*, 110) discusses the military and judicial aspects of the *comes orientis*.

49. These documents are collected with notes and discussion in *The Abinnaeus Archive*, ed. H.I. Bell, V. Martin, E.G. Turner, and D. van Berchem (1962).

50. *Abinnaeus Archive*, 79; the petitions are nos. 48 (in which a serving soldier is the accused) and 45 and 47 (in which veterans are the plaintiffs).

soldiers and their ability to employ violent force may have prevented civic authorities from exercising powers that they had in theory, particularly in areas distant from Roman civilian authority. Doubtless this tendency was even stronger in times of war or internal unrest, as the Roman army represented stable authority with the means to enforce public order.

### Soldiers as Police and Tax Collectors

The general issue of the army as a policing and controlling agency was raised in chapter 1, where the guard duties of soldiers at Dura-Europos were considered. Evidence from the eastern empire shows that soldiers—often centurions, *stationarii*, and *beneficarii* on detached service—were employed in a policing role, maintaining public order and enforcing the decisions of judicial authorities.<sup>51</sup> Centurions are ubiquitous in Egyptian papyri, and biblical and Talmudic material suggest the same was true in Judaea.<sup>52</sup>

Less detailed evidence is available from Syria and Mesopotamia, but even in the limited corpus of known papyri from the middle Euphrates valley, there are references to two centurions as police.<sup>53</sup> The first failed to restore to the petitioner a vineyard taken over by someone else, giving rise to a petition for its restoration addressed to the vice-governor. The second was Julius Marinus, “in charge of the good order of Sphoracene,” to whom a petition was addressed by a woman. She complained that her brother had been killed by someone who kept his possessions although they were due to her. The editors suggest that Sphoracene was a district west of the Khabur that included the town of BIRTHA.<sup>54</sup> Brief reference has been made already to the inscriptions of the late second century from Phaena in Trachonitis that apparently show legionary detachments com-

51. Davies, in “The Daily Life of the Roman Soldier,” 323, discusses soldiers as jailers and inflictors of punishment, citing evidence from the New Testament. O. Hirschfeld, in “Die Sicherheitspolizei im römischen Kaiserreich,” in *Kleine Schriften* (1913), 591f., provides a general survey of the roles of *beneficarii*, *stationarii*, *frumentarii*, and others in policing.

52. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 395 n. 1 lists some examples of centurions as police from Egypt over the first three centuries A.D. Alston, in *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt*, 81–96 and 157, discusses the policing and judicial functions of centurions and soldiers there. Isaac, in *Limits*, 115–18, discusses the police functions of the army in Judaea. The Midrash on Deuteronomy 32:14 (cited at *ibid.*, 115), with references to tribunes, centurions, *beneficarii*, and others as oppressors, is particularly interesting.

53. *P.Euphr.* 2 and 5.

54. Commentary on *P.Euphr.* 5.

manded by centurions. These do not provide us with much detailed information about the centurions' duties. Most are Greek dedications to emperors by centurions of *legio III Gallica* or *legio XVI Flavia Firma*.<sup>55</sup> A few others are dedications to such centurions,<sup>56</sup> and another pertains to military lodging.<sup>57</sup> As Isaac suggests, it seems likely that road security was their main function, but undoubtedly they were involved in the control and protection of the communities themselves.<sup>58</sup>

Individuals with the title of *beneficiarius* are rare in this region, but probably due more to a lack of evidence than to an absence of *beneficiarii*. The many examples from Dura-Europos were mentioned in chapter 1, and one is attested at Sidon.<sup>59</sup> A *beneficiarius* of *legio X Fretensis* is recorded in a Greek inscription from Seeia (Σί') in the Djebel Druze, and another inscription from the same site names a soldier of *legio VIII Augusta* along with one P. Veterius Maximus, who is described as κούστως Σεία.<sup>60</sup> Veterius' name suggests that he was a soldier, and as the editor suggests, κούστως seems to be a transliteration of the Latin word *custos*. The editor suggests that Σεία is an ethnic, but it seems more likely that the phrase means "guard at Seeia" and that there was some sort of guard post or toll station there, associated with the control of nomads in that area.

There is no clear evidence that Roman authorities policed major cities on a regular basis in the early and middle empire. The previously mentioned areas in Egypt, Judaea, southern Syria, and the middle Euphrates were rural in character, with towns lacking the developed institutions of northern Syria and Asia Minor.<sup>61</sup> There is evidence for municipal police

55. IGRR III, 1113–16 (*legio III Gallica*), 1117–18 (*legio XVI Flavia Firma*). C. Helvisius Marianus, the centurion who dedicated 1116, seems to have been a civic benefactor on a large scale, as he records that he donated a shrine and a statue at his own expense. He may be the individual named on a fragmentary Latin inscription from the same site, CIL III, 126.

56. IGRR III, 1120–22, discussed earlier in this chapter.

57. IGRR III, 1119, discussed shortly.

58. Isaac, *Limits*, 134–36.

59. CIL III, 151 (Sidon, *legio II Traiana Fortis*, probably late second–early third century). As I mentioned in chapter 1, note 30, he may be a veteran returned to his home community rather than an individual detached from a (non-Syrian) legion, although there is no explicit reference to veteran status. *P.Bostra* 1 is a petition to a *beneficiarius* with complaints of theft from a village in the territory of Bostra in Arabia.

60. M. Dunand, *Mission archéologique au Djebel Druze: Le musée de Soueida* (1934), 20–21, no. 15; 77–78, no. 162.

61. However, some of their institutions echo those of the larger cities. For example, in IGRR III, 1119, Phaena is referred to as μητροκωμία, "mother village," rather than as

forces in many of those cities, and probably Roman authorities used the army directly to police areas where civic police did not exist and perhaps as a last resort where they did.<sup>62</sup>

The evidence for army policing in the later empire is not extensive but is relatively clear. As in the earlier period, some cities had their own police forces. The speeches of Libanius suggest that the “club bearers,” “guardians of the peace,” and “archers” of Antioch fulfilled such a function.<sup>63</sup> During the “Riot of the Statues” in A.D. 387, the commander of the τοξόται (archers) failed to act against the mob in the first instance, and only then were troops employed.<sup>64</sup> The ἐγκαθήμενος λόχος (resident garrison) stationed in the city in the A.D. 390s probably acted as police, in contrast to earlier periods when troops stationed in and around the city were kept from such duties as much as possible.<sup>65</sup>

It is unclear whether the φύλακες τῆς χώρας (guardians of the rural territory) in villages, whom Libanius contrasts with soldiers based there, were village officials or officials of Antioch to whose territory the villages belonged.<sup>66</sup> Harper states that there is no evidence of village police from Syria and that civic or imperial agents performed these functions.<sup>67</sup> However, Isaac points out that the evidence for policing by regular soldiers in the communities of southern Syria is largely confined to the reigns of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, and he suggests that the local population may have taken over such duties in the later empire.<sup>68</sup> This seems likely when the evidence of provision of fortifications by local civilian authorities is considered. MacAdam notes that from the fourth century A.D. onward inscriptions recording the erection of φρούρια (fortifications) by local civilians become common in the villages of southern Syria, and fortified towers are a common feature of such communities.<sup>69</sup> Most

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μητρόπολις, “metropolis” or “mother city”). For the use of the former term to denote a stage of municipal development, see H.I. MacAdam, *Studies in the History of the Roman Province of Arabia* (1986), 79–84.

62. For municipal police in the cities of Roman Asia Minor, see Hirschfeld, “Die Sicherheitspolizei im römischen Kaiserreich,” 599f.; D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (1950), 647–48, 1514–16 nn. 46–47. Such a force seems to have existed in Antioch in the fourth century A.D., as will be discussed shortly.

63. See Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, 122, 124–25.

64. See Libanius *Or.* 19.34–36.

65. See *ibid.*, 46.13.

66. *Ibid.*, 47.6.

67. G.M. Harper, *Village Administration in the Roman Province of Syria* (1928), 57.

68. Isaac, *Limits*, 138.

69. H.I. MacAdam, “Epigraphy and Village Life in Southern Syria during the Roman and Early Byzantine Periods,” *Berytus* 31 (1983): 103–15, at 108.

of the evidence that survives for the dates and the builders of the fortifications of the so-called *limes* of Chalcis suggests that these were built through the early Byzantine period for local defense by civilian authorities, often ecclesiastical.<sup>70</sup> It seems likely that local civilian authorities bore much of the responsibility for local policing and low-level defense (as against bandits) both in cities and in the countryside from the fourth century A.D. onward.<sup>71</sup>

Nevertheless, soldiers continued to play a role in the maintenance of public order. They figure in persecution of Christians by pagan emperors in the east and in (relatively rare) instances of persecution of eastern Monophysites by Chalcedonian authorities. Eusebius' account of the fate of the Christian Domnina of Antioch and her daughters in A.D. 305/6 indicates that they were arrested by soldiers in Syria, to be brought back to Antioch, and makes much of their fear of rape.<sup>72</sup> A letter of Maximinus cited by Eusebius orders eastern provincial governors to encourage provincial populations to show appropriate respect to the pagan gods lest they suffer insults or blackmail at the hands of *beneficiarii* or others.<sup>73</sup> The fact that Maximinus actually sanctioned persecution suggests that this was a veiled threat. Thus it would appear that policing *beneficiarii* operated against Christians as part of their duties rather than on an unofficial and personal basis, as the letter implies at first reading. Eusebius also records that a *dux* in Damascus during the reign of Maximinus forced prostitutes to claim that they were Christians and to testify to the illegal practices of their supposed coreligionists. A letter (of similar date) of the praetorian prefect Sabinus cited in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* orders governors to instruct various officials, including *praepositi*, to ensure that Christians were not harassed.<sup>74</sup> These passages suggest that

70. This is what inscriptions in Mouterde and Poidebard's *Le Limes de Chalcis* actually indicate, contrary to the conclusions of those scholars. Some examples are discussed below, in chap. 4, in the section on Christianity and the army.

71. Banditry certainly was a problem in Syria in the fourth century A.D. On the Maratocupreni, a village of bandits who ravaged the area around Apamea in the reign of Valentinian until hunted down and exterminated by soldiers, see Isaac, *Limits*, 97–99; Ammianus Marcellinus 28.2.11–14, Libanius *Or* 48.36. As Isaac notes, they only attracted the army's attention when they attacked the house of a prominent individual. Less important civilians probably depended on their own efforts and those of the church and other benefactors.

72. Eusebius *HE* 8.12.3.

73. *Ibid.*, 9.9a.7. On Maximinus and Christians, see S. Mitchell, "Maximinus and the Christians in A.D. 312: A New Latin Inscription," *JRS* 78 (1988): 105–24.

74. Eusebius *HE* 9.5.2, 9.1.6–7.

middle-ranking and upper-level army officers retained some responsibility for public order. Soldiers also were employed by Arian authorities to persecute non-Arians in Alexandria and Edessa.<sup>75</sup>

It is clear that soldiers were billeted in villages in Syria, but Libanius' contrast between soldiers and φύλακες (guards) in the territory of Antioch may indicate that the troops were not there primarily to police and control the territory but only quartered there in the winter or for training.<sup>76</sup> It may have been different in rural areas outside the territories of major cities, but the Abinnaeus archive provides only a few references to soldiers employed in policing duties in mid-fourth-century Egypt.<sup>77</sup>

A related subject is that of soldiers as tax collectors. The broader problem of the interrelationship of taxation and army supply is considered in chapters 5 and 6. Here the issue is only that of the direct, physical exaction of taxes by military personnel. In the early and middle empire, in theory at least, both major direct and lesser indirect taxes and dues were collected by civilian officials, whether those of the central government, such as procurators, or municipal officials, or private tax farmers. Initially, at least, the army entered the process of tax collection as assistants to such civilians. Roman officials, such as procurators, employed soldiers on their staffs at a variety of levels, as administrative or clerical assistants or to provide security.<sup>78</sup> A soldier employed at the upper level of administration in Syria was the military tribune C. Clodius Nigrinus of *legio X Fretensis*, described on his tombstone from Antioch as *adiutor* to the procurator C. Clodius Priscus; the inscription is perhaps (as Seyrig suggests) to be dated to that legion's deployment in Syria in the Julio-Claudian period.<sup>79</sup> A papyrus from the Babatha archive shows a census declaration received by a cavalry commander in Arabia in A.D. 127.<sup>80</sup> The use of soldiers to support the collection of taxes at the lowest level in the early empire is demonstrated in Egypt by

75. See Theodoret *HE* 2.14 (A.D. 356), 4.17 (A.D. 371).

76. Libanius *Or.* 47.6.

77. For example, in *Abinnaeus Archive*, 50–51, no. 9, an official asks Abinnaeus to seize smuggled natron. However, this is a fiscal matter with a link to the central government, not quite the same as day-to-day maintenance of public order. It is clear that some of the Egyptian communities with which Abinnaeus dealt still had *eirenarchs* and other civilian officers who performed those functions.

78. Pliny (*Ep.* 10.27) informed Trajan that an imperial freedman on the staff of the procurator had requested six soldiers in addition to the ten *beneficarii* he had already.

79. *IGLS* III.1, 837. Seyrig's view is cited by the *IGLS* editors *ad loc.*

80. *P.Yadin* 16.

the case of Nemesion, a collector of capitation taxes in Philadelphia in the first century A.D., who employed a variety of military and non-military bodyguards.<sup>81</sup> It seems likely that such procedures were common in Syria and Mesopotamia too.

A related practice was stationing of soldiers at customs points, where taxes were levied on produce by civilian officials. We see the apparent coexistence of military *beneficarii* and *statores* with a civilian customs officer at the main gate of Dura-Europos, early in the Roman occupation of that city (discussed in chapter 1). The soldiers perhaps defended the gate against any incursions, acted as police to keep out undesirable individuals, and backed up the authority of the civilian tax collector if necessary. The coincidence of military bases and frontier crossings at such places as Zeugma and the location of military stations on communications routes with a tradition of use for long-distance trade, as at Dura-Europos, suggests that soldiers were involved in exaction of tolls and customs dues. The author of the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ed. Casson, 19) recorded that at Leuke Kome on the Red Sea coast of Arabia a collector of the 25 percent customs dues on incoming cargoes was stationed with a centurion (ἐκατοντάρχης) and soldiers.<sup>82</sup> If soldiers were seen by the provincials as acting in direct support of tax collectors and even employing violent force when necessary, the distinction between civilian official and military retinue would have become blurred. In fact, there is some evidence that soldiers did collect taxes themselves, at least on occasion, in the Principate.<sup>83</sup>

The Abinnaeus archive shows the use of soldiers to back up civilian tax collectors in the later empire too.<sup>84</sup> The ambiguity of the soldiers' position in tax collection was reinforced further by the emergence of the *annona militaris* (military food ration). It is far from clear exactly what the term *annona militaris* denoted. Van Berchem, in the standard study of

81. See A.E. Hanson, "Village Officials at Philadelphia: A Model of Romanization in the Julio-Claudian Period," in *Egitto e storia antica dall'ellenismo all'età araba*, ed. L. Criscuolo and G. Geraci (1989), 429–40, at 435–36. Alston (*Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt*, 79–80) also discusses soldiers and tax collection.

82. However, this may well have been a Nabataean institution, the term for a centurion being borrowed from Roman usage. See G.W. Bowersock, *Roman Arabia* (1983), 70–71. For a recent argument that the centurion was Roman, see G.K. Young, "The Customs-Officer at the Nabataean Port of Leuke Kome," *ZPE* 119 (1997): 266f.

83. See Isaac, *Limits*, 282–83, especially the Talmudic passage cited at 282, Leviticus Rabbah XXX 6 (ed. Margulies).

84. In *Abinnaeus Archive*, 39–40, no. 3, Flavius Macarius, a procurator of imperial estates, asks Abinnaeus for troops to assist the civilian *officialis* in collecting taxes.

the subject, suggests that it was a specific tax, collected in kind and used to supply soldiers, and that it developed in the later second century.<sup>85</sup>

Certainly it is true that some provinces of the Roman empire were taxed in kind at that time and that some of the tax went to provide soldiers' rations. Similarly, rents in kind were exacted from imperial estates, and some were used to supply soldiers, as were irregular levies of supplies in kind. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 5. However, the term *annona militaris* as used in late imperial legal sources, such as the Theodosian Code, appears to refer exclusively to rations that were given to soldiers, not to a tax from which rations were provided. In the later empire, tax generally was exacted in kind and soldiers' rations were issued in kind (chapter 6), and it seems likely that the *annona militaris* was just the proportion of taxes passed on to soldiers as supplies, rather than a regular element of taxes used specifically to supply the army and Roman officials, from at least the third century onward. That a proportion of the tax collected was directly passed on to soldiers for subsistence may have blurred the distinctions between tax collection and consumption.

In theory, perhaps, in the fourth and fifth century, civilian officials of the praetorian prefect and curial appointees took responsibility for the collection and distribution of taxes in kind that were passed on to soldiers as *annona*. Collection was by procurators (ἐπιμελήται, junior officials, rather than imperial procurators) and *exactores*, and the produce was deposited in state granaries, where *praepositi horrei* (men in charge of rations) assigned rations to *actuarii*, civilian quartermasters assigned to military units. Units of the *comitatus* on the move collected their rations from the public granaries against warrants, the collection being done by soldiers called *opinatores*.<sup>86</sup>

However, the reality of the situation was rather different, as is indi-

85. D. van Berchem, "L'Annone militaire dans l'empire romaine au III<sup>ème</sup> siècle," *Mémoires de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* 8/10 (1937): 117–202. This issue is discussed at some length in D. van Berchem, "L'Annone militaire est-elle un mythe?" in *Armées et fiscalité dans le monde antique* (1977), 331–36, which is countered by J.-M. Carrié in "Le Rôle économique de l'armée dans l'Égypte romaine" (in *ibid.*, 373–91), who argues against it being a specific tax, merely the portion of revenue destined for the army. R. Develin ("The Army Pay Rises under Severus and Caracalla and the Question of Annona Militaris," *Latomus* 30 [1971]: 692–95) argues that food rations issued free to soldiers under Severus or Caracalla were linked with sporadic taxes (including food) attested by contemporary jurists. Useful studies of the collection of irregular levies and the collection of taxes by soldiers in general in the later empire are Isaac, *Limits*, 286–89, and MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian*, 60–61, 85.

86. As reconstructed by Jones in *LRE* vol. 1: 456–59.

cated by the documents of the Abinnaeus archive. These show civilians and soldiers intermingled at all levels of the process.<sup>87</sup> Two documents give an idea of the usual procedure.<sup>88</sup> It seems that a civilian ἐπιμελήτης under an ἐξάκτωρ was responsible for collecting the tax. In the former document, Agathus, a military *actuarius*, writes to Abinnaeus complaining that Uranius, a civilian ἐξάκτωρ, has failed to secure enough *annona* and should collect it from the inhabitants of a named community. It is clear from these documents that the *annona* was brought to military bases after collection and kept there for consumption or to pass on to other consumers. Other documents in the archive list contributions of wheat, barley, oil, and cash made, presumably to soldiers under Abinnaeus' command, by communities in the southwest Fayoum. The editors suggest that the norm was for civilians to collect taxes in kind but that troops may have collected them themselves in regions close to their bases.<sup>89</sup> If this was the case in Egypt, undoubtedly it was also true in such areas as Mesopotamia, with its combination of fortress cities and dispersed forts throughout the countryside. Likewise, the *opinatores* of the *comitatus* seem to have tried to circumvent cumbersome civilian bureaucracy by exacting supplies directly from provincials, and this was forbidden by the emperor.<sup>90</sup>

Scattered references from Dura-Europos may attest to the direct collection of taxes in kind. The rolls of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* indicate that men were sent to obtain grain (*frumentum* and *hordeum*, discussed in *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 41); there are references to *horrea* in the camp or the city being guarded by troops;<sup>91</sup> and an *actuarius*, probably a military supply official, is mentioned in a portrait label from a house.<sup>92</sup> He need not have been associated with the collection of tax but may have been, as was Agathus in the Abinnaeus archive. The evidence from Dura may refer to purchase of supplies rather than to taxation or requisition, because elsewhere there is specific reference to the purchase of barley by soldiers.<sup>93</sup> The evidence from Dura dates to the A.D. 240s, perhaps a period

87. There is a general discussion in *Abinnaeus Archive*, 17–18.

88. *Abinnaeus Archive*, 73–75, no. 26; 78f., no. 29.

89. *Ibid.*, 140–49, nos. 66–70; 151–54, nos. 72–74.

90. See *C.Th.* 7.4.26 (A.D. 401).

91. *Dura Final Report* 5.1 376–83, nos. 106–10 *passim* (= R.O. Fink, *Roman Military Records on Papyrus* [1971], nos. 13, 15, 14, 19, and 17, respectively).

92. *Dura* 6, 291–92, no. 1.

93. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 270–78, no. 82, col. ii, line 4, ca. A.D. 233–35 (= Fink, *Roman Military Records*, no. 47).

of transition from the tax system of the Principate, which in Syria seems to have been cash based (see chapter 5), to collection in kind, which is generally assumed to be Diocletianic but may have emerged earlier.<sup>94</sup> At any rate, whatever the administrative principles involved, the army seems to have played a direct role in obtaining its own supplies at Dura.

There is further evidence to suggest that soldiers of the later empire collected taxes regularly. On the basis of Talmudic material, Isaac concludes that it was the norm; a rescript of A.D. 321 states that *stationarii* and *urbani milites* should not collect taxes (and hence implies that they did); and with specific reference to our region, Theodoret indicates that soldiers normally collected taxes at Edessa.<sup>95</sup> Finally, as in the Principate, the points for collection of customs dues on the eastern frontier that are known from late imperial sources—namely, Dara, Nisibis, and Callinicum (discussed in chapter 6)—all coincided with major military bases.

### Billeting and Other Forms of Requisition

In addition to collecting taxes, the Roman army engaged in other forms of exploitation on a more or less regular basis to meet immediate requirements. One form of requisition mentioned already was of buildings or parts of building to serve as billets for soldiers.<sup>96</sup> Evidence for this from cities was discussed in chapters 1 and 2. At the legionary bases of the early and middle empire, troops may have been based in separate camps close to cities or (as at Dura-Europos) in specific parts of those cities. However, there is evidence of appropriation of civilian housing for military purposes throughout our period, both in cities and in smaller communities, and this undoubtedly caused conflict between soldiers and civilians.

The best evidence for the billeting of soldiers comes from the later empire, when the stationing of troops in cities became common throughout the empire rather than merely in the eastern provinces as before. As a general source of legal problems, the practice of billeting became a topic of some importance in law codes, such as the Theodosian Code. In the early and middle empire it was a more strictly eastern phenomenon.

It is possible that legionary bases were located close to cities rather

94. This is an important theme of L. Neesen, *Untersuchungen zu den direkten Staatsabgaben der römischen Kaiserzeit* (1980).

95. Isaac, *Limits*, 286–87; CJ 4.61.5; Theodoret HE 4.17 (A.D. 371).

96. Military billeting is discussed in Isaac, *Limits*, 297–301, and MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian*, 78–84.

than within them, and Tacitus' reference to military service spent in towns need indicate not that soldiers actually slept in them but merely that their camps were close enough for them to spend time there.<sup>97</sup> Certainly he refers to *castra* in a later passage in which the Syrian legions' strong ties to the civilian population are emphasized.<sup>98</sup> Perhaps permanent legionary camps were large enough to house all the men who needed to be accommodated, but accommodation of additional troops in transit and in preparation for campaigns probably required billeting. Moreover, the formal division between camp and city might be permeable, as at Dura-Europos.

The earliest evidence for such problems is an inscription from Epiphania/Hama dating to the reign of Domitian.<sup>99</sup> This is a statement by the emperor referring to problems caused principally by the illegal requisition of draught animals by officials. However, there is also a brief reference (lines 11–12) to problems caused by lodging. Given the small scale of civilian administration in the province at that time, it seems likely that such officials included soldiers. More explicit evidence for the quartering of troops in houses comes from the late second and early third centuries A.D. An inscription from Phaena in southern Syria, dating to A.D. 185/6, records a letter of Julius Saturninus, legate of Syria, to the people of the community.<sup>100</sup> In it he notes that because they have a lodging house (ξενῶνα), they cannot be compelled to accept “strangers” in their houses. An earlier reference to problems caused by “soldier or private individual” shows that soldiers were involved, and given the number of military inscriptions from that area in the same period, it seems likely that the “strangers” in question are not single individuals who happen to be passing through but substantial numbers of soldiers engaged in policing the region. Referring to Caracalla's reign, Cassius Dio claimed that the eastern legions wintered in houses and abused compulsory hospitality. From the same period comes a passage of Ulpian recorded in the *Digest*, indicating that a governor should protect the poor from exactions by soldiers and officials, apparently in the context of compulsory hospitality.<sup>101</sup>

Evidence from Dura-Europos (see chapter 1) illustrates the use of civilian housing by the Roman army in the first half of the third century

97. Tac. *Ann.* 13.35.

98. Tac. *Hist.* 2.80.

99. *IGLS* V, 1998, translated by Millar in *Roman Near East*, 85–86.

100. *IGRR* III, 1119.

101. *Digest* 1.18.6.5 (Ulpian *Opiniones* 1).

A.D. It is clear that in some cases houses within the “military quarter” of the city were taken over completely by the army and converted into specialized barracks.<sup>102</sup> Other houses outside the “military quarter” provide evidence for occupation by soldiers. The “House of the Roman Scribes” preserves the names of an *actuarius*, Heliodorus, and a *tesserarius*, Ulpius, along with other Greek or Semitic names that the editors suggest were the names of either civilian officials associated with the soldiers or the owners of the house in which the soldiers were billeted.<sup>103</sup> Likewise, the status of Demias and his brother, who seem to have shared a house in block M8 with Rufianus and Basilianus, is unclear.<sup>104</sup> They are described as σϛ(α)θμοϛ̃[χοι]. In another context at Dura, this term is taken to mean a lodging official, but the editors suggest that here it might mean the individuals on whom the soldiers were billeted, and this use of the word is attested elsewhere.<sup>105</sup>

Perhaps both or either of these houses contained soldiers and civilians in coresidence. Otherwise either the houses were abandoned when taken over by the army (which seems unlikely) or they were requisitioned complete and their owners were forced to live elsewhere. It is not clear whether occupation of civilian housing was regular at Dura or an unusual and temporary requisition to accommodate larger numbers of troops for the defense of the city. Emergency billeting may have been practiced at transit bases, such as Apamea, when necessary for the eastern campaigns of the late second and third century, which were carried out by ad hoc expeditionary forces. From the later third century, evidence for billeting in cities increases as cities were used as military bases more frequently.

Presumably fortress cities founded with defensive requirements in mind were built with specialized accommodation for troops within their walls, at least for their permanent garrisons. Barracks within cities are poorly known. The καταλύτῃρια that Procopius claims Justinian built at Dara to prevent troops from bothering the civilian population may be the only literary record of such accommodation, and if we take his account at face value, it suggests that no such barracks existed there before.<sup>106</sup> Permanent garrisons of most cities listed in the *Notitia Dignitatum* were relatively small, but problems of housing undoubtedly became more se-

102. An example is the house in block E4 (*Dura* 6, 19–48).

103. House A in block L7 (*Dura* 6, 265–308).

104. See *Dura* 6, 178, no. 697; 176–78, nos. 695–96.

105. E.g., *Dura* 9, pt. 1, 260–61.

106. Procopius *Buildings* 2.3.26.

vere when garrisons were swollen by additional troops from the *comitatus* on their way to the frontier or supplementing the defenses of a city about to be attacked. Ammianus describes this at Amida in A.D. 359. He also refers to the quartering of the *Celtae* and *Petulantes* in temporary lodgings (*diversoria*) at Antioch when Julian was preparing to march east. The large scale of military movements on the eastern frontier throughout the fourth century meant that housing large numbers of soldiers regularly was a common problem of city life at that time. Soldiers were billeted in villages too, and Libanius refers to such a situation in his oration dealing with the problems of military patronage.<sup>107</sup>

The burden of compulsory billeting and the depredations of troops led to considerable legal discussion in the fourth century. This discussion focused on exemptions from *hospitium* and the limits of the demands for food and other goods that the soldiers could make on their hosts.<sup>108</sup> Legal evidence emphasizes abuses of the system, but other sources illustrate the problem too. A letter attributed to Aurelian in the *Historia Augusta* gives advice on how to maintain military discipline, listing forms of misbehavior in which soldiers might engage, including theft of poultry, sheep, and other food; violence; and drunkenness.<sup>109</sup> He advises the recipient of the letter to ensure that his men enrich themselves by pillaging the enemy, not the provincial population, and behave themselves in their billets. General charges of drunkenness, violence, theft, and extortion are found in Ammianus' and Libanius' accounts of soldiers in Antioch, from the preparations for Julian's campaign against the Persians to the period after

107. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.9.3–4, 19.2.14, 22.12.6; Libanius *Or.* 47. Mouterde discusses a fragmentary and difficult inscription from a village site in northern Syria (R. Mouterde, "A travers l'Apamène," *MUSJ* 28 [1949–50]: 28–31), which he suggests is either a late fifth-century or a sixth-century reference to abuses of the system in which a billeting officer (*mentor*) wrote how many soldiers would be billeted in a house over its door, as attested in *C.Th.* 7.8.4 (A.D. 393). *C.Th.* 7.8.5 (A.D. 398) states that two-thirds of the house should be retained by the host and that the rest should be taken by the guests, except for a guest with the rank of *illustris*, who got half of the house.

108. Exemptions are discussed at *C.Th.* 7.8.1 (A.D. 363; senators), 7.8.2 (A.D. 368, 370, 373; synagogues), 7.8.3 and 7.8.16 (A.D. 384, 435; high officials), 7.8.5 (A.D. 398; workshops), and 7.8.8 (A.D. 400, 405; armorers; citing Antioch in particular). Concerning illegal exactions, *C.Th.* 7.9.1 (A.D. 340) states that a host may provide a billeted individual with oil and wood (probably for light and heat) if the host wishes but that he cannot be compelled to do so. *C.Th.* 7.9.2 (A.D. 340, 342) forbids forcible exaction of wood, oil, and bedding, and *C.Th.* 7.9.3 and 7.9.4 (A.D. 393, 416) repeat that measure. The same three commodities caused problems between the citizens of Edessa and the Gothic troops billeted there in A.D. 505/6, according to the *Chronicle* of Joshua the Stylite, discussed shortly.

109. *HA*, *V. Aurel.* 7.5–7.

the “Riot of the Statues” when the ἐγκαθήμενος λόχος had been installed.<sup>110</sup> The account of the Persian wars of the reign of Anastasius in the *Chronicle* of Joshua the Stylite shows that similar problems existed in the early sixth century. The author records that in A.D. 504–5 the Roman army wintered in Tella (Constantia), Rhesaina, and Edessa. He claims that the defenders of the city acted more like conquerors, and he records that soldiers billeted in the houses of the citizens plundered and abused them.<sup>111</sup> The same happened in the winter of A.D. 505/6 when troops under the *dux* were quartered in Edessa. The poor, complaining about the Gothic soldiers who were billeted on them, asked that the rich bear more of the burden. The rich demanded that the *dux* set a limit on how much oil, wood, and bedding the Goths could requisition for subsistence. When he tried to do so, the soldiers turned on him, and he was unable to control them. A large Roman army was quartered in the city and the nearby villages and convents for five months, and the troops engaged in drunkenness, theft, and murder. It is interesting to note that the *magister* wanted to get his troops away as quickly as possible to limit damage to the city.<sup>112</sup> Exactions forbidden by the Theodosian Code include demands for *cenatica superstatua*, money for food beyond a soldier’s subsistence allowance.<sup>113</sup> However, all citizens could be required to bake military biscuit (*bucellatum*) to supply the troops when they went on campaign.<sup>114</sup> Another problem mentioned in the Theodosian Code was the grazing of military animals on public land belonging to cities.<sup>115</sup>

There were other requisitions by which the army could exploit the civilian population. Before the regularization of the *annona militaris*, there were irregular levies by the imperial government to fund campaigns and demands for subsistence that soldiers and officials in transit could impose on civilian populations, and undoubtedly these were harsh in areas through which armies passed to wars on the eastern frontier.<sup>116</sup> The liturgy of *angaria*—transport by civilians and their communities of, for

110. Ammianus Marcellinus 22.12.6; Libanius Or. 46.13, 47.33.

111. Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* (ed. Wright), 81, 86.

112. See *ibid.*, 92–96.

113. *C.Th.* 7.4.12 (A.D. 364).

114. See *ibid.*, 7.5.2 (A.D. 404).

115. *Ibid.*, 7.7.3 (A.D. 398).

116. Van Berchem (*L’Annone militaire*, 141) cites, for example, Pliny the Younger *Panegyricus* 29, contrasting *indictiones* with regular *tributa*, and Siculus Flaccus in *Corpus Agrimensorum Romanorum*, ed. C. Thulin (1913), p. 129, lines 18–20: *nam et quotiens militi praetereunt aliue cui comitatu annona publica praestanda est.*

example, military supplies—would similarly have been a harsh burden in areas where major wars were common. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 5. Requisition of labor and transport animals for Roman soldiers and officials is attested in a number of ancient sources.<sup>117</sup> A good example from Syria is the Domitianic inscription from Epiphania/Hama discussed in the context of billeting.<sup>118</sup> The majority of the inscription deals with the requisition of draft animals by officials (probably including military personnel) without imperial authority (μη ὁ ἐμὸν ἔχων δίπλωμα [not possessing my diploma], lines 18–19). There are also references to the taking of individuals as local guides (ὁδηγόν [route-leader], line 27) and implications that violence had been involved in previous abuses (line 26).

### Conclusions

Evidence discussed in this chapter shows how military officers and ordinary soldiers acted as agents of the state and used their status to exploit the civilian population throughout the period under study. Most surviving evidence dates to the third century and later, but the behavior attested has origins in the Principate. Military interference in civilian administration, often attributed to blurring of civilian and military and increased intervention by central government after the reign of Diocletian, is attested at Dura-Europos and in papyri from the middle Euphrates as early as the mid-third century.

In addition to official and “corporate” exploitation and control of the civilian population of the provinces,<sup>119</sup> the status of military personnel and their capacity for violence enabled them to exploit civilians on an individual level. Violent and threatening behavior by individual soldiers seems to have been common, as were bribery and extortion.<sup>120</sup> Soldiers held positions of legal privilege that discouraged provincials from seeking

117. This is discussed, for example, in Isaac, *Limits*, 291–97, and Alston, *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt*, 111 (on the use of civilians to transport supplies). *Abinnaeus Archive*, 62–63, no. 18 is a complaint from the president of the council of a community that had been visited by some of Abinnaeus’ troops who stole and acted abusively, apparently in the course of conscripting men for labor or military service.

118. *IGLS* V, 1998.

119. This includes administration of justice, in which soldiers performed the functions of civilian officials, even if not strictly sanctioned by central authority.

120. Fictional accounts of such behavior, such as Juvenal’s *Sat.* 16 and Apuleius’ *Met.* 9.35f. are supported by papyri, such as *Abinnaeus Archive*, 76–77, no. 28. For a general account of military oppression of civilians, see Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, 246–54.

justice. They appear to have had a right of trial in their camp by a military judge, which would have been a distinct advantage to a soldier in his dealings with civilians, particularly if camp and city stood side by side.<sup>121</sup> The general presumption in the *Digest* is that soldiers have an advantage over civilians in court cases. For example, a situation discussed by Arrius Menander concerns a man who enlists to gain an advantage in a lawsuit.<sup>122</sup> A civilian who resisted a legionary who tried to appropriate his ass (a fictional incident in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*) was jailed and faced capital punishment.<sup>123</sup>

In all these respects, notions of the Roman army as an “instrument of violent force” (Shaw’s term) engaged in the control of the provincial civilian population and as an institution separated from civilians by both function and status do seem appropriate.<sup>124</sup> Next, one must examine military personnel beyond their formal status, to see if informal relations with civilians might have moderated the execution of duties toward them. Consideration of geographical and ethnic origins may show whether the status distinction between soldiers and civilians was also an ethnic one or whether soldiers were drawn from the local civilian population. Comparison of soldier and civilian in terms of language use and religious practices are related issues, as are aspects of social integration between the two, such as intermarriage and veteran settlement.

121. Juvenal *Sat.* 16 indicates a right to trial in the camp. On this, and the other legal privileges of soldiers, see Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, 246–54; P. Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire* (1970), 245–51.

122. *Digest* 49.16.4.8 (Arrius Menander *De re militari* 1), discussed in Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, 246–54.

123. Apuleius *Met.* 9.42.

124. Shaw, “Soldiers and Society,” 151.

## CHAPTER 4

# Informal Interaction: Ethnicity and Integration

### Ethnicity and Army Recruitment

Attempts to establish whether military personnel were of the same or similar ethnic backgrounds to the civilian populations in the areas in which they were stationed require consideration of the ethnic composition of the civilian population. This is not a simple aim, particularly with regard to Syria and Mesopotamia, and particularly given the complications of the available evidence. It requires consideration of the concept of ethnicity and the means by which it might be detected.

In general terms, one can define ethnicity as a broad sense of identity and community based on shared culture and history.<sup>1</sup> This need not (and generally does not) coincide with, but may coexist with, identities derived from place of origin or birth, citizenship, or political or judicial status. There are few explicit statements of ethnic identity in evidence from Syria and Mesopotamia. When the origins of individuals are identified with simple formulas (e.g., in epitaphs), these tend to refer to a city (and hence, perhaps, a local citizenship) or geographical area (such as province) of birth.<sup>2</sup> Other, less explicit expressions of identity in, for example, funerary inscriptions include the *tria nomina* to denote Roman citizenship and

1. Anthony D. Smith, in *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1986), suggests six factors that define an ethnic group: a collective name, a common myth of descent, a shared history, a distinctive shared culture, association with a specific territory, and a sense of solidarity. Some of these factors apply to a range of groups in the Roman Near East. Besides Romans, Greeks (Greco-Macedonians), Jews, and perhaps Phoenicians, Arabs and “Syrians”/“Aramaean” seem to fit Smith’s definition. See Millar, *Roman Near East*, intro. and chap. 1; “Empire, Community, and Culture.”

2. Examples are *domo Hemesa* (in P.-L. Gatier, “Une Inscription latine du moyen-Euphrate,” *Syria* 71 [1994]: 151–57); *Dacico nat(ione), nati(ione) Aegypt(ius)*, or *natio Alexandrin(us)* (IGLS III.2, 1167, 1165, 1178); *natus in Dacia ad Vatabos* (AE 1993, 1577); and *civis Perusinus* (AE 1993, 1584). Of course, *Aegyptius* and *Surus* may indicate ethnic identity as well as geographical origin.

include military ranks and titles to display status and institutional membership. This does not mean that ethnicity did not exist as a concept or that it was unimportant. Nonethnic identifiers (citizenship, place of birth) may have been considered more appropriate for external, formal, public display in epigraphic contexts. Ethnicity, a less legal concept, may have been expressed implicitly (by cultural choices, such as language use, religion, material culture) or may have been considered more appropriate to informal and internal modes of communication, such as popular literature, conversation, and stories. Since informal texts and oral traditions rarely survive from the Roman Near East (Syriac and Jewish religious texts and, e.g., the graffiti from Dura-Europos sometimes fill this gap), we are largely forced to define ethnicity in blunt terms based on cultural manifestations, such as language use and nomenclature, religion, and material culture.

To begin this rather inexact process of defining ethnicity, we may note that Fergus Millar has drawn a fundamental distinction between Greeks and Aramaic/Syriac-speaking Σύκοι and has suggested a high degree of cultural homogeneity from Roman Syria eastward into the western parts of the Persian empires.<sup>3</sup> In some areas of the later Roman east, notably Osrhoene, Syriac literacy and linguistic cultures were strong, even in major urban centers, such as Edessa. Even in areas where the settlement of Greco-Macedonians had been more intensive and where contacts with the Greco-Roman Mediterranean world were not disrupted by the Parthian empire, rural societies may have retained Aramaic and Syriac linguistic cultures, as in the territory of Antioch in Libanius' lifetime. This linguistically based cultural division is useful but perhaps glosses over realities. As Shahîd has shown, Syria and the surrounding areas in the Roman period were more diverse than language alone might suggest.<sup>4</sup> He notes that some terms used to describe non-Greco-Roman cultures are inappropriate: *Semitic* is far too general, *Syrian* primarily geographical rather than cultural, and *Aramaean* merely linguistic. He notes the existence of distinct Arab groups in the region, some not always perceived as Arab, because they adopted Aramaic and related languages, and because Romans did not identify them specifically as Arabs.<sup>5</sup> He suggests they

3. Millar, "Empire, Community, and Culture," 144–45.

4. I. Shahîd, *Rome and the Arabs: A Prolegomenon to the Study of Byzantium and the Arabs* (1984), 6–7.

5. As Shahîd points out (*Rome and the Arabs*, 9 n. 24), the Jews did not lose a specific ethnic identity when they adopted Aramaic as their language. However, a nonlinguistic

included more assimilated groups, such as Ituraeans and Emesenes, and more distinctive groups, such as Palmyrenes and the Arabs of the upper Khabur, from Osrhoene to Hatra. Other ethnic groups within the region included the Phoenician populations of the coastal cities of Syria and Lebanon and Jewish populations of various sizes, from the large communities of Babylonia to smaller groupings, such as Libanius' Jewish rural tenants. Often we are forced back onto rough-and-ready linguistic and geographical criteria, unable to make finer distinctions than, for example, between Latin, Greek, and Aramaic. This confusion is not ours alone. Josephus, himself a writer of Aramaic, noted that the Greeks defined the Σύροι as Aramaic speakers.<sup>6</sup> Undoubtedly, finer distinctions were not always clear to Greeks or Romans, and unfortunately, there remains little discussion of them from the mouths or pens of individuals to whom these distinctions were clear and important.

The Greco-Macedonian population of the region was largely urban, and the most hellenized area was the tetrapolis of Antioch, Seleucia Pieria, Apamea, and Laodicea, which, along with Zeugma, formed the core of Seleucid Syria. However, Macedonian colonies were founded throughout the region, and communities that identified themselves as descendants of those colonies survived even in areas that had been part of the Parthian empire. Dura-Europos retained Greek institutions, widespread use of the Greek language, and a ruling elite claiming to be of Greco-Roman origin in the context of an ethnically, culturally, and linguistically mixed community. Even here, however, there is scope for complication. We might be tempted to define as "Greco-Macedonian" both a "Roman" legionary based at Dura, such as Julius Antiochus (whose family probably came from one of the Seleucid colonies of northern Syria), and a contemporary *bouleutes* of Dura-Europos. However, one wonders whether it is useful to use a "common" ethnic definition that encompasses families that had been Roman citizens for several centuries and

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definition makes it difficult to define what exactly constituted "an Arab" in the ancient Near East. Shahîd himself is not very explicit, mixing up definitions based on language, geography, lifestyle (nomadism and pastoralism), and identification of peoples as Arab by Greeks and Romans. The problem of identification is exacerbated by the fact that the term *Arab* seems to have had negative connotations to Greeks, Romans, and even some inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula, and many avoided using the term of themselves, even when we or others would regard them as such. The issue is discussed by Potter in *Prophecy and History*, 216–18. Similarly, Millar, in *Roman Near East*, 512–14, discusses the problems of identifying Arabs in the pre-Islamic period.

6. Josephus *AJ* 1.144.

others that had been in the Parthian empire for even longer, whatever their common origins in the past.

Except, perhaps, for serving soldiers (an issue discussed in this chapter), large-scale Roman-Latin settlement of the region was limited to the *colonia* of Berytus. The settlement of Syrian legionary veterans at Ptolemais may have included Italians but probably also included a substantial number of easterners by that time.

The identification of the geographical origins and ethnic identities of the “Roman” soldiers stationed in Syria and Mesopotamia is not an easy matter. The most straightforward form of evidence, inscriptions bearing the place of origin of a soldier, is rare. Likewise, there is little literary evidence concerning the raising of units. The *cognomina* of auxiliary units, known from inscriptions and discharge diplomas and the *Notitia Dignitatum*, may tell us where that unit was originally raised, but not necessarily where later recruits came from. The names of soldiers, the languages they used, and their religious preferences must be treated with caution, as they may demonstrate assimilation rather than origin. Those issues are examined later in this chapter.

#### Legionary and Auxiliary Recruitment to the End of the Third Century A.D.

The standard recent works on legionary recruitment in the early and middle empires are by Forni and Mann.<sup>7</sup> From his collection of evidence (primarily epigraphic) for the origins of legionary soldiers, Forni proposed two general theses. The first is that in the empire as a whole most legionaries from the beginning of the period to the reign of Claudius were Roman citizens of Italian extraction. Through the reigns of Claudius and Nero, about half the recruits for the legions were of provincial origin, and by the reign of Trajan, legionaries of provincial birth outnumbered Italians by about four or five to one.<sup>8</sup> Given the large time span covered by the present study, it is clear that, for our purposes, the legions were heavily “provincialized” at a relatively early time. However, this “provincialization” does not necessarily mean that recruits were from the province in which their units served. Forni’s second thesis is that there were two distinct recruitment areas for the legions in the period from Augustus

7. G. Forni, *Il reclutamento delle legioni da Augusto a Diocleziano* (1953) and “Estrazione etnica e sociale,” *ANRW II.1* (1974): 339–91; Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*.

8. See Forni, *Il reclutamento delle legioni*, 65f.

to Trajan, a Latin-western area that provided troops from and for service in the western provinces, and a Greek-eastern area that provided troops from and for service in the eastern empire.<sup>9</sup> Legions based in Cappadocia, Syria, and Egypt were made up of recruits from Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, but not *necessarily* from the province in which the soldier was based. In support of this concept of broadly regional recruiting is Tacitus' statement that Nero ordered a levy of recruits in nearby provinces to supplement the eastern legions in A.D. 54.<sup>10</sup>

Table 25 in Mann's book sets out the epigraphic evidence for Syria.<sup>11</sup> It lists forty-nine inscriptions with the *origines* of legionaries of units based in Syria, Arabia, Judaea, and Mesopotamia from Augustus to ca. A.D. 300. Few westerners are represented (a total of four, three before A.D. 117), and there are eleven individuals, evenly spread over time, from Greece and Asia Minor. The rest are from the eastern frontier provinces but are unevenly distributed over the region. Twelve are of *legio III Cyrenaica*, based at Bostra in Arabia, where enough archaeological work has been done to find a reasonable number of inscriptions. The Syrian legionary camps, in contrast, are hardly represented at all. Another ten individuals are known from *legio XV Apollinaris*, which was in Syria from A.D. 62 to A.D. 71. The inscriptions were found at Carnuntum in Pannonia, where the legion was based after it left Syria, but the dates suggest that these troops were recruited during its stay in Syria. As Mann indicates, these inscriptions do not necessarily give a picture of typical recruitment, as the legion was more or less continuously at war during that period and may have required emergency drafts from unusual sources to replace casualties, particularly since it was cut off from levies from the western recruiting grounds for part of the period, due to civil war.<sup>12</sup> However, they indicate that individuals from Syria were recruited for the legions at this early date, and they do give us some idea of areas from which legionary manpower could be drawn and that, perhaps, were used routinely by legions permanently based in Syria. Four individuals were from the *colonia* of Berytus and from Heliopolis-Baalbek, part of its *territorium* at that time.<sup>13</sup> Since Berytus was the only significant center of Italian-Latin population and culture in Syria, these individuals were as

9. Ibid. 83–85; Forni, "Estrazione etnica e sociale," 385.

10. Tac. *Ann.* 13.7.

11. Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*, 144–46.

12. Ibid. 41.

13. See Millar, "The Roman *Coloniae*," 18–19.

close to Italian Roman citizens as were available in the east and cannot be regarded as “local” in any significant sense. The identification of the population of Berytus with imperial power—and perhaps the presence of continued military traditions there—is shown by their contribution of fifteen hundred volunteer infantry for Vespasian’s army in A.D. 67.<sup>14</sup>

The remaining six individuals came from hellenized cities (or, at least, their territories) in northern Syria—two from Antioch, three from Cyrrhus, and one from Chalcis. This is interesting, since there is some other evidence of an interrelationship between the legions and the northern Syrian cities by the Flavian period. The evidence for the location of legionary camps near some of those cities was discussed in chapter 1, and the passage from Tacitus’ *Histories* implying that members of the Syrian legions had social links with the people of Antioch in A.D. 69 was cited there.<sup>15</sup> There are several reasons why one might expect men from the northern Syrian cities to be recruited at a fairly early stage, reasons stronger for men of urban, rather than rural, origin. One is the proximity of the Roman army and the Roman administrators of the province. Individuals from that area were more “romanized,” in the sense of being used to dealing with Romans, rather than necessarily in a broader cultural sense. Another reason is that they spoke Greek, which, if Forni’s thesis is correct, was significant in recruiting for the eastern legions. A third reason may have been the military connections of those cities (and perhaps some of the population) in the Seleucid period. Finally, there were more likely to be Roman citizens in that area than in the less urbanized parts of the region, perhaps including descendants of individuals recruited into Mark Antony’s army in the civil war. However, as Mann points out, Syrians of noncitizen peregrine status may have been recruited for legions in the Julio-Claudian period as during the civil war.<sup>16</sup> Northern Syrian soldiers (and perhaps soldiers from the Greek cities of Asia Minor) may have been culturally similar to the urban populations of the cities where early legionary bases were located.

Other evidence that Syrian legions of the Flavian period were characteristically “Syrian” in some way comes from Tacitus’ reference to *legio III Gallica* saluting the rising sun “according to the custom in Syria” [*ita in Syria mos est*] at the battle of Cremona-Bedriacum during the civil war

14. See Josephus *BJ* 2.67.

15. Tac. *Hist.* 2.80.

16. Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*, 49.

in A.D. 69.<sup>17</sup> This implies that, in Tacitus' view, soldiers of that legion either were from Syria or had adopted a Syrian custom. There is no evidence of this from epigraphic material, as only one inscription of that legion giving an *origo* survives from before A.D. 117, commemorating an individual from Gallia Narbonensis.<sup>18</sup> Four other inscriptions relevant to this legion refer to Syrian recruits—a second-century individual from Apamea and, from the third century, one from Arethusa in inland southern Syria and one from Trachonitis, both in the south of the country, closer to where the legion was based.<sup>19</sup> It is difficult to make a trend from this, but it may indicate increased recruitment from the region of Syria around the legion's base by the third century.

Mann also provides a table showing recruitment of Syrians and other easterners by units normally based outside of the east but deploying vexillations in the region. Presumably the recruitment of Syrians had taken place when the vexillations were actually in the east.<sup>20</sup> The best-documented unit is *legio III Augusta*, normally based in Numidia, which contributed a vexillation to Trajan's eastern wars in A.D. 116–17. Bearing in mind that the sources of recruits may not have been typical (perhaps the result of emergency levies to replace casualties), we see that Mann's table provides the *origines* of forty-three individuals from Syria and Palestine. One was described just as *Syrus*; thirteen were from hellenized northern Syria (Antioch, Apamea, Laodicea, Zeugma, Beroea, Larissa), fifteen from Phoenician cities (Arados, Sidon, Tripolis, Tyre, Gabala), four from the Roman colonial territory of Berytus-Heliopolis, one from the *colonia* of Ptolemais, three from inland southern Syria and the Decapolis (Damascus, Capitolias), and three from Judaea (Caesarea, Anthedon).

Few recruits from the Syrian cities show indications of recent citizenship. There is only one Ulpius, from Berytus; but one Flavius, two Iulii, and two Claudii are named in another inscription, which includes other more typically Republican nomina, such as Livius, Valerius, Marcellus, and two Aemilii.<sup>21</sup> These names, as well as the Antonii named in two

17. Tac. *Hist.* 3.24.3.

18. *CIL* XII, 2230.

19. *AE* 1939, 57 (interestingly, a single undated inscription from Apamea [*IGLS* I, 149] refers to that legion, so part or all of it may have been based there at some time, and the individual may have been recruited then); *CIL* III, 2904; *IGRR* III, 1148.

20. Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*, 147–49, table 25A.

21. Ulpius is mentioned in *CIL* VIII, 3278; the others are mentioned in *CIL* VIII, 18084.

inscriptions,<sup>22</sup> may attest to citizenship acquired during the civil wars. Only one cognomen is specifically Greek in character (C. Antonius Alexander), and one fragmentary one (-rhyto) may have been.<sup>23</sup> Both were from Antioch. None had Aramaic names.

Legionary vexillations in the east between A.D. 117 and Severus Alexander's Persian wars recruited six Syrians—one from Antioch, two from Hierapolis, three from Emesa. Mann's tables showing Syrian recruits to legions based in Egypt and Cappadocia indicate that most were from northern Syria and Phoenicia, with few from inland southern Syria.<sup>24</sup> *Legio III Cyrenaica* at Bostra in Arabia drew more recruits from those areas, particularly by the third century, including the villages of northern Arabia and southern Syria and Palmyra.<sup>25</sup> One gets a general impression that inland southern Syria was a regular source of legionary recruits later than northern Syria<sup>26</sup> and that they were used more in Arabia and southern Syria than throughout the eastern empire. The area may have lacked suitable legionary recruits in the first century of the Principate, as it came under Roman control later than northern Syria; there were fewer Roman citizens, and Greek was not widespread that early. Also there may have been a preference for local recruitment, because local recruits were used to the local environment, and perhaps their ethnic and cultural backgrounds made them more suited to the control of individuals from similar backgrounds.

In contrast to this evidence for local recruiting is an inscription from Arados, which names a centurion (probably a veteran) of a unit whose name is erased (probably *legio III Gallica*), stating that his *origo* was Ulpia Oescus in Lower Moesia.<sup>27</sup> It is dated A.D. 185/6, which seems late for recruits to have come in from the west. Another Balkan centurion (this time of *IIII Scythica*) was Aelius Verecundinus from Dacia, whose epitaph was found at Apamea, where he died, probably in A.D. 217/8.<sup>28</sup>

22. *CIL* VIII, 18214, 18084.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*, 154–55, table 29; 152, table 27.

25. See *ibid.*, table 25.

26. The only two recruits known from *legio XII Fulminata*, probably based in southern Syria before the Jewish revolt in A.D. 66, were Italians. Ituraeans from southern Syria were used as auxiliary troops by A.D. 88, as a diploma (*CIL* XVI, 35) discussed later in this chapter indicates.

27. *IGLS* VII, 4034.

28. *AE* 1993, 1577 (= J.-Ch. Balty and W. van Rengen, *Apamea in Syria: The Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica. Roman Gravestones from the Military Cemetery* (1993) (hereafter cited as *Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica*), 29 and pl. 7).

However, evidence for the import of experienced members of the centurionate (Verecundinus in particular had a long career as *frumentarius* and *speculator*) does not cast any serious doubts on local recruitment of the majority of soldiers in the Syrian legions.

There is little evidence of the composition of legions based in Mesopotamia, and local recruitment is obscured by the almost total lack of inscriptions from Mesopotamia. One inscription of a veteran, C. Lucius Marcellus, of *legio I Parthica*, dated to A.D. 226/7, comes from the Decapolis (probably from Antioch ad Hippum) and states that he retired to his native land.<sup>29</sup> The veteran of *legio I Parthica* who settled at Aphrodisias in Caria may have come from there,<sup>30</sup> and Mann (tables 25 and 26) provides references to four other legionaries of the Mesopotamian legions who were recruited in or later settled in Asia Minor.<sup>31</sup> Smith suggests that *legiones I* and *III Parthicae* (at least) were raised in the east, contrary to Mann's theory that all new legions were raised in Italy.<sup>32</sup> *Legio II Parthica* was based at Albanum in Italy for much of the first half of the third century, but recruits were from the Balkans.<sup>33</sup> Evidence for the composition of the unit during its stays at Apamea in Syria emphasizes the large number of Thracian and other Balkan-Danubian recruits and of individuals with Greek names.<sup>34</sup> The only known individual associated with the legion and Apamea is Aurelius Chrysomallus, *quintanensis legionis, ortus C(laudiae? -ivitate?) Apameae*, known from his epitaph at Albanum.<sup>35</sup> *Quintanensis* is a rare term, referring to duty on the *quintana* (a market street in a military camp) or to the market held there. Verinius Marinus, the *librarius officii leg(ati)* of *legio II Parthica* who died at Apamea in A.D. 231–33, may have been Syrian, as *Marinus* is a common latinized Syrian name.<sup>36</sup> Probably his secretarial position

29. H. Seyrig, "Antiquités syriennes 45. Inscriptions diverses," *Syria* 27 (1950): 236–50, especially 247, no. 7.

30. See ILS 9477, together with M.P. Spiedel and J. Reynolds, "A Veteran of Legio I Parthica from Carian Aphrodisias," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 5 (1985): 31–35.

31. Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*, tables 25–26.

32. R.E. Smith, "The Army Reforms of Septimius Severus," *Historia* 21 (1972): 481–500, at 486 n. 28; J.C. Mann, "The Raising of New Legions during the Principate," *Hermes* 91 (1963): 483–89.

33. See Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*, table 31.

34. See J.-Ch. Balty, "Apamea in Syria in the Second and Third Centuries A.D.," *JRS* 78 (1988): 102.

35. *CIL* XIV, 2282; see also Balty, "Apamea in Syria," 103.

36. See *AE* 1993, 1587 (= Balty and van Rengen, *Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica*, 41 and pl. 17).

(*librarius*) required a higher degree of Greek and Latin literacy than usual for many Danubian recruits, and he may have been a rare local recruit in a legion otherwise composed of outsiders.

The composition of auxiliary units at this time is equally difficult to determine. As I mentioned in the introduction, it is possible that early in the Principate many supporting units in the east were local and supplied by client kings. Josephus describes how Joseph, Herod the Great's brother, was defeated near Jericho in 38 B.C., commanding a force described by the author as "Roman"; and Josephus states that five cohorts in the force had been recruited recently in Syria.<sup>37</sup> This shows an interrelationship between clients, the Roman army, and local recruitment, but the exact implications are unclear. There is also relatively little evidence for the composition of the regular *auxilia* of the Roman army in Syria in the Principate, and there are particularly few inscriptions (such as epitaphs) giving origins of individual soldiers. However, there are military diplomas, bronze tablets issued to individuals (mainly of auxiliary, praetorian, and naval units) as certificates of citizenship and *conubium* awarded as the result of military service. When complete they usually include the date of discharge, name, unit, and place of origin of the soldier. They also list all the units from the same province of service from which other individuals were discharged at the same time. The titles of auxiliary units on diplomas (and elsewhere) generally include a geographic or ethnic indicator of where the unit was originally recruited. Thus diplomas provide two ways of determining the ethnic composition of auxiliary units. The first is the inclusion of the *origo* of an individual soldier; the second is the listing of auxiliary units in the province with their ethnic cognomina. A noteworthy bias in this information is that all the diplomas that refer to units stationed in Syria were found outside of that province, generally in the place to which the soldier retired. This probably is due to biases of survival and discovery rather than to recruitment patterns. We know that auxiliary troops were recruited in Syria and that some of them retired there. However, their diplomas have not been preserved or found.

Several auxiliary diplomas refer to (or appear to refer to) the province of Syria.<sup>38</sup> Also, an inscription from Macedonia lists a number of units,

37. Josephus BJ 1.324. Schurer, in *History of the Jewish People*, 1:363f., discusses the importance in Judaea of troops from Sebaste (Samaria), taken over from the Herodian army, and of local recruitment from Caesarea.

38. CIL XVI, 3 (A.D. 54), 35 (A.D. 88), 103 (A.D. 134–38?), 106 (A.D. 156/7); RMD 1, nos. 3 (A.D. 88), 4 (A.D. 91), 5 (A.D. 91). The dates are those given in M.M. Roxan, *Roman Military Diplomas, 1978–1984* (1985), 19–24.

most from the garrison of Syria, commanded by an equestrian officer in Mesopotamia during Lucius Verus' war against the Persians.<sup>39</sup> The diplomas provide the following information.

**CIL XVI, 3 (A.D. 54).** Diploma awarded to Romaesta (a Thracian name, according to the editor), son of Rescens, a cavalryman of *ala Gallorum et Thraecum Antiana*; found in Moesia Inferior. The following units, in addition to two that are not legible, are named.

*ala veterana Gallorum et  
Thraecum*

*ala Gallorum et Thraecum  
Antiana  
ala Gallorum et Thraecum  
[name incomplete]*

**CIL XVI, 35 (A.D. 88).** Diploma awarded to Birthus (probably Thracian) of the *cohors Musulamiorum* (raised in Africa Proconsularis); found in Thrace. Units named are

*ala II Pannoniorum  
ala veterana Gallica  
cohors I Flavia civium  
Romanorum  
cohors I Lucensium (Spain)  
cohors I Sebastena (Palestine)  
cohors I Numidarum  
cohors II Italica civium  
Romanorum  
cohors III Thracum Syriaca  
(Thracians, based in Syria)  
cohors III Bracaraugustanorum  
(Spain)  
cohors Musulamiorum (Africa)*

*ala III Augusta Thracum  
cohors I milliaria  
cohors I Ascalonitanorum  
(Palestine)  
cohors I Ituraeorum (southern  
Syria)  
cohors II Thracum civium  
Romanorum  
cohors II classica (ex-sailors)  
cohors IIII Syriaca (raised and  
based in Syria, or just based  
there?)  
cohors IIII Callaecorum  
Lucensium  
cohors Augusta Pannoniorum*

39. CIL III, 600.

**RMD 1, no. 3 (A.D. 88).** Diploma awarded to Dassius, son of Dasens, a Pannonian of the *ala Phrygum*. Units named are

<i>ala Phrygum</i> (Phrygia)	<i>ala praetoria singularium</i>
<i>ala Sebastena</i>	<i>ala Gallorum et Thracum</i>
	<i>constantium</i>
<i>ala Gallorum et Thracum</i>	
<i>Antiana</i>	
<i>cohors Gaetulorum</i> (Africa)	<i>cohors I Augusta Thracum</i>

**RMD 1, no. 4 (A.D. 91).** Diploma awarded to Quelse (the dative form of the name, probably Thracian), son of Dola, of *ala III Thracum Augusta*. Units named are

<i>ala Flavia praetoria singularium</i>	<i>ala Gallorum et Thracum</i>
	<i>constantium</i>
<i>ala III Thracum Augusta</i>	
<i>cohors I Sebastena</i>	<i>cohors I Thracum milliaria</i>
<i>cohors II Thracum civium</i>	<i>cohors I Gaetulorum</i>
<i>Romanorum</i>	
<i>cohors II Thracum Syriaca</i>	<i>cohors I Lucensium</i>
<i>cohors II Italica civium</i>	
<i>Romanorum</i>	

**RMD 1, no. 5 (A.D. 91).** Diploma awarded to Seuthes (a Thracian) of *ala veterana Gallica*. Very fragmentary; no other unit names legible.

**CIL XVI, 103 (A.D. 134–38?).** Fragmentary diploma awarded to an individual whose name is not legible, son of Saraba; found in Pannonia Superior. Units named are

<i>ala VII Phrygum</i>	
<i>cohors IIII Callaecorum</i>	<i>cohors IIII or VII Gallorum</i>
<i>Lucensium</i>	

**CIL XVI, 106 (A.D. 156/7).** Diploma awarded to an individual whose name is not legible, of *ala I Ulpia singularium*; found in Thrace. Units named are

<i>ala Thracum Herculiana</i>	<i>ala I Ulpia dromedariorum</i>
<i>ala I Ulpia singularium</i>	
<i>cohors I Ascalonit [anorum]</i>	<i>cohors I Ulpia Dacorum</i>
<i>sagittaria</i>	
<i>cohors II Ulpia equitata</i>	<i>cohors I Ulpia Petraeorum</i>
<i>cohors II Italica civium Romanorum</i>	<i>cohors I Augusta Pannoniorum</i>
<i>cohors I Flavia Chalcidenorum</i>	<i>cohors I Claudia Sugambrorum</i>
(Chalcis ad Belum or Chalcis ad Liban in Syria?)	(Gallia Belgica)
<i>cohors II Ulpia Paphlagonum</i>	<i>cohors III Augusta Thracum</i>
(Asia Minor)	
<i>cohors II Thracum Surica</i>	<i>cohors IV Gallorum</i>
<i>cohors II classica sagittaria</i>	<i>cohors V Ulpia Petraeorum</i>
<i>cohors III Ulpia Paphlagonum</i>	<i>cohors VII Gallorum</i>

**CIL III, 600.** Inscription from Gradista in Macedonia recording the career of an equestrian officer, M. Valerius Lollianus, *praepositus* of a vexillation in Mesopotamia (probably in Lucius Verus' war of A.D. 162–66) comprising the following units:

<i>ala praetoria Augusta</i>	<i>ala Agrippiana</i>
<i>ala Herculiana singularium</i>	<i>ala Syriaca</i>
<i>cohors I Lucensium</i>	<i>cohors V Chalcidenorum</i>
<i>cohors II Ulpia equitata civium Romanorum</i>	<i>cohors V Petraeorum</i>
<i>cohors I Flavia civium Romanorum</i>	<i>cohors II Ulpia Paflagonum</i>
<i>cohors I Thracum</i>	<i>cohors I Ulpia sagittariorum</i>
<i>cohors III Ulpia Paflagonum</i>	<i>cohors III Dacorum</i>
<i>cohors II equitata [?]</i>	<i>cohors I Sygamborum</i>
<i>cohors I Ascalonitanorum felix</i>	

The general impression given by the names of these units is that many of them were raised in the Balkans and the west, particularly Thrace, which combined the advantages of a traditional reputation for ferocity, familiarity with the Greek language, and a recruiting ground closer than Gaul or Spain. There were always a few units from eastern areas

(Ituraeans from southern Syria and troops from Sebaste and Ascalon, both in Judaea, figure in the earlier diplomas), but later diplomas show more, including some with the title *Ulpia*. Some of these units were raised in the east by Trajan for his campaigns on the eastern frontier and as a result of the annexation of Arabia, and a number have specific indications of eastern origin, such as the *ala I Ulpia dromedariorum*, a camel unit, and various *cohortes Ulpiae Petraeorum* from Arabia Petraea. They remained in the east and probably continued to draw local recruits.<sup>40</sup>

While a large proportion of the auxiliary units named in diplomas clearly were raised in the west, it is unclear whether they continued to draw recruits exclusively or primarily from their places of origin or recruited from the eastern provinces in which they were based. Of the diplomas just listed, those with indication of the soldier's origin show only Thracian and Pannonian recruits even into the second century, even in units with ethnics indicating that they were raised in Africa and Phrygia. The sample is small and is biased by the fact that no diplomas have been found in Syria, but there is no evidence of local recruitment to units with non-Syrian ethnics.<sup>41</sup> In a study based primarily on evidence for units in Pannonia, Cheesman concluded that local recruitment was standard for those units, regardless of ethnic origin, after ca. A.D. 70 and certainly by the second century A.D.<sup>42</sup> Pannonia had a population with a reputation for their warlike character, and so the Romans may have found local recruits acceptable there. This may not have been true of Syria, where the population was stereotyped as unwarlike. It is likely that local recruitment became the norm for units based in Syria eventually, but some recruits from the Balkans were still drafted into units based in Syria in the earlier second century.

A rare Latin inscription recording the origin of an auxiliary soldier

40. See G.L. Cheesman, *Auxilia of the Roman Imperial Army* (1914), 80.

41. Perhaps at some stage these units were composed mainly of Syrians with a few Thracians. If the relative survival of diplomas in Syria and Thrace informs us of the Thracians who retired to Thrace but not of the Syrians who remained in Syria, then all the *known* recruits are Thracians.

42. Cheesman, *Auxilia*, 74–79. The general principle that auxiliary units lost their original ethnic character when they left the province of their recruitment and that further recruits were found locally has been restated by Kraft from western evidence (K. Kraft, *Zur Rekrutierung der Alen und Kohorten am Rhein und Donau*, [1951]). Holder reevaluated this, region by region. He noted the general lack of evidence from Syria but suggested, “Units in Egypt, and probably the rest of the East, were soon accepting local recruits” (P.A. Holder, *The Auxilia from Augustus to Trajan* [1980], 109–39, particularly 121).

based in Syria was published recently by Gatier.<sup>43</sup> This was found some twenty kilometers south of Carchemish/Europos, near the Euphrates. It records the name of a *signifer* (standard-bearer) of *cohors I Ascalonitanorum*, Marcus Gora. The unit was part of the auxiliary garrison of Syria as early as A.D. 88 (see *CIL* XVI, 35, cited earlier) and as late as A.D. 208 (according to a papyrus from Dura).<sup>44</sup> No calendar date is given, but the editor suggests the late first to early second centuries A.D. on paleographic grounds. The inscription gives the soldier's home as Emesa (*domo Hemesa*) in southern Syria. Presumably this formula relates to place of birth rather than to the permanent base of the unit. If so, it indicates that a cohort raised much further south (in Ascalon in Palestine) was accepting recruits from Syria proper by, perhaps, the early second century.

A second document recording an auxiliary soldier is a recently discovered diploma from Pamphylia.<sup>45</sup> This belonged to an individual of *cohors I Musalamiorum* with the cognomen *Galba*, discharged in A.D. 138. His place of origin is listed as Cyrrhus. Since the cohort is attested in Syria in A.D. 88, it is likely that Galba was a local Syrian recruit to this nominally African cohort, who moved to Lycia-Pamphylia with the unit and apparently retired there.

Sailors' epitaphs from Seleucia Pieria give a fairly clear picture of the composition of the naval units deployed there during the Principate. As might be expected (because many were members of the fleets based at Misenum and Ravenna in Italy), the sailors were overwhelmingly of foreign, very diverse origins. Inscriptions naming the *nationes* of the deceased include references to Pannonia, Galatia, Sardinia, Egypt, Phrygia, Corsica, and Alexandria.<sup>46</sup> Only a sailor of the *Classis Syriaca*, presumably raised locally, came from Syria, his *natio* being Chalcis.<sup>47</sup>

Dura-Europos provides the next body of evidence of the origins and ethnicity of soldiers based in the east. While inscriptions regarding the army are virtually unknown from third-century Syria, Dura-Europos provides exceptionally detailed evidence for legionary vexillations and auxiliary cohorts based there until its fall in A.D. 256/7.

43. P.-L. Gatier, "Une Inscription latine du moyen-Euphrate."

44. For *cohors I Ascalonitanorum* in Syria in A.D. 208, see *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 316, no. 100, col. xiii, line 9 (= Fink, *Roman Military Records on Papyrus*, no. 1).

45. J. Russell, "A Roman Military Diploma from Eastern Pamphylia," *AJA* 95 (1991): 469–88.

46. *IGLS* III.2, 1159, 1161, 1164, 1165, 1171, 1172, 1178.

47. See *ibid.*, 1163.

One particularly interesting feature of that garrison and of some others in the middle Euphrates is the presence of Palmyrene troops.<sup>48</sup> They are attested at Dura before it came under Roman control, and they are also attested in the earliest Roman garrison.<sup>49</sup> The latter was a detachment of archers commanded by a Palmyrene *strategos*.<sup>50</sup> It appears to have been a unit of allied troops under their own officers rather than a regular unit of the Roman army. Such units of Palmyrene archers are attested in several provinces, including Dacia and Africa, from the reign of Trajan onward. In addition to their value as archers, they were an obvious choice to deploy at Dura, because Palmyrenes had traveled and policed the Euphrates valley before the Romans took control, and doubtless they knew the cities well and were accustomed to local conditions.

Another unit of at least nominally Palmyrene identity was deployed at Dura-Europos at least by A.D. 208 and remained there until the fall of the city. This was a regular auxiliary cohort of the Roman army, the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, a milliary *cohors dromedaria*, with a detachment of camel riders. The employment of specialized troops recruited in the region is interesting, perhaps part of a more general trend starting in the second century A.D. when Trajan recruited eastern units for local service. Certainly his *cohortes Ulpiae Petraeorum*, recruited in Arabia, were particularly suited to local conditions on the eastern frontier, just as the Palmyrenes were at Dura. Palmyrene soldiers would not have been culturally identical to the Mesopotamian population of Dura and surrounding rural districts, as they had their own distinctive identity and military ethos.<sup>51</sup> Their language was similar, but not identical, to the Aramaic spoken at Dura. However, the inhabitants of the region could communicate with Palmyrenes and were accustomed to their presence (often in a policing role), and hence such troops were better suited to the control of the city and its hinterland than were Thracians, Italians, or northern Syrians. Further, the names of members of the unit recorded in papyrus documents of A.D. 208 and later suggest that by this time it was recruited

48. The epigraphic evidence for Palmyrene troops at Ana and Gamla is discussed in app. A. As mentioned there, excavations at Kifrin revealed graffiti written in Latin, Greek, and Aramaic in the Hatraean alphabet. This may indicate that ethnic Arab soldiers from the region of Hatra played a similar role there to the Palmyrenes at Dura.

49. *Dura* 7/8, 264f., 279–81, no. 909, dated to ca. A.D. 150. Cf. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 24 n. 3.

50. See *Dura* 7/8, 83f., nos. 845–46 (A.D. 168); 170–71.

51. This is stressed by Shahid in *Rome and the Arabs*, 38.

primarily from local Mesopotamians/Syrians rather than specifically from Palmyrenes.<sup>52</sup>

A few other auxiliary units are attested in and around Dura-Europos. The first is the *cohors II Ulpia equitata*, raised in the reign of Trajan, perhaps in the eastern empire.<sup>53</sup> Another is *cohors II Ulpia Paphlagonum*, attested in A.D. 250/1.<sup>54</sup> This was another Trajanic unit, originally raised in Asia Minor, although it is not attested in Syria until a century and a half after its recruitment. Dura papyri refer to two other units deployed in the lower Khabur area, *cohors III Augusta Thracum* and *cohors XII Palaestinorum*.

The names of troops at Dura-Europos provide evidence of the ethnic origins of legionary and auxiliary soldiers there. A comprehensive study of nomenclature at Dura would be a huge project, but some observations can be made.<sup>55</sup> Names identified as those of legionaries by a reference to a legion in the inscription or papyrus are found in the following places.

- a. the Latin building inscription of the amphitheater, which indicates it was built by a vexillation of *legiones IIII Scythica* and *III Cyrenaica* under Aurelius Mam[maeus?] (perhaps military tribune) and Iustianus, *princeps* (senior centurion).<sup>56</sup>
- b. A Latin building inscription set up in the *mithraeum* by M. Antonius Valentinus, centurion and *princeps* of a vexillation of *legiones IIII Scythica* and *XVI Flavia Firma*, and a dedication in the *dolicheneum* to the same officer.<sup>57</sup>
- c. A Latin dedication to the emperor in the *praetorium*, by a *librarius* (clerical officer) of *legio IIII Scythica*, Iulius Domninus, and his *adiutores* (assistants) Aurelius Antiochus, Donnius Pasias, Septimius Sigillianus, and Aurelius Magnus.<sup>58</sup>
- d. Graffiti in a house (close to another graffito reading *legio IIII*

52. This is discussed in more detail later in this chapter. See also C.B. Welles, "The Population of Roman Dura," in *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honour of Allen Chester Johnson*, ed. P.R. Coleman-Norton (1951), 251–74, at 271.

53. *Dura* 1, 42–44, no. 1 (A.D. 185–92; the reading *P(aphlagonum)* was later abandoned); *Dura* 5, 226–29, no. 561 (A.D. 194); perhaps *Dura* 2, 83–86, no. H1.

54. *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 110–14, no. 971.

55. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 37–38 has a brief discussion of the subject based on papyri, and Welles' "The Population of Roman Dura" briefly considers the issue of ethnicity based on nomenclature.

56. *Dura* 6, 78, no. 630.

57. *Dura* 7/8, 85, no. 847; *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 107, no. 970.

58. *Dura* 5, 224–26, no. 560.

*Scythica*), naming Basilianus and Rufinianus in Latin and Greek, and naming Demias (who may or may not have been a soldier) in Greek.<sup>59</sup>

- e. A Greek dedication by Iulianus, a soldier of *legio XVI Flavia Firma*.<sup>60</sup>
- f. A Greek dedication by Aurelius Theoteknos, a soldier of *legio IIII Scythica*.<sup>61</sup>
- g. A Greek divorce document on papyrus, naming Julius Antiochus, a soldier of *legio IIII Scythica*.<sup>62</sup>

These sources show a mixture of Latin and Greek names. Only one (b) includes the *tria nomina*, but several have the nomen *Aurelius*, which indicates recent acquisition of citizenship, probably the result of the *Constitutio Antoniniana* of A.D. 212. The sources suggest a high level of recruitment of individuals of Greco-Macedonian extraction and hellenized Syrians. There are no clearly Semitic names, but some may be translations. *Theoteknos* ('son of god'), for example, is a Greek translation of a common Syrian name.<sup>63</sup> Latin was used for more formal dedications and some graffiti, Greek for private dedications and graffiti.

The best-documented auxiliary unit at Dura-Europos is *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, as papyrus records of the unit were found in the temple of Azzanathkona. Latin documents list soldiers of the unit assigned to various duties, the longest dating to A.D. 219, after the *Constitutio Antoniniana*.<sup>64</sup> Thus, not surprisingly, all the names are prefixed with the nomen *Aurelius*. A significant minority of the men have a second nomen derived from an emperor (e.g., Aurelius Ulpius, Aurelius Aelius, Aurelius Flavius, Aurelius Iulius), suggesting that the individual was a citizen before the *Constitutio Antoniniana* and that the *Aurelius* was superfluous. Their cognomina are Latin or Greek (Aurelius Aelius Bassus, i, line 11; Aurelius Flavius Nicomachus i, line 10; Aurelius Ulpius Marinus, xxxvii, line 3).<sup>65</sup> A few soldiers have *Aurelius* and a Latin or latinized name

59. *Dura* 6, 176–77, nos. 695–97.

60. *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 115, no. 974.

61. *Ibid.*, 118, no. 976.

62. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 166–69, no. 32.

63. See M.A. Speidel, "Legio IIII Scythica, its Movements and Men," 182.

64. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 308–39, no. 100 (= Fink, *Roman Military Documents*, no. 1).

65. Apparently such Latin names as *Bassus*, *Germanus*, and *Marinus*, which were common in Syria, may be transliterations or translations of Semitic names (see E.D. Francis,

(Aurelius Germanus, xiv, line 10) but most combine *Aurelius* with a Greco-Macedonian or Semitic cognomen, sometimes followed by a genitive patronymic. Hence we find mention of Aurelius Heliodorus (xx, line 9), Aurelius Baricas Ierhaei (xiv, line 1), Aurelius Abedlahas Buccaei (i, line 4), and Aurelius Seleucus Barbaessam[en] (vi, line 33). Semitic names predominate, but there are common Greek names too. These might belong to individuals of Greco-Macedonian origin or to hellenized Aramaic/Syriac speakers. Alternatively they may be translated or transliterated Aramaic names. These individuals seem to have been drawn, broadly, from the same ethnic background as the majority of the civilian population of Dura—Aramaic/Syriac-speaking Syrians/Mesopotamians. The records give no indication that recruits were primarily Palmyrene at this time. If the cohort was raised ca. A.D. 165 as Kennedy suggests, deployed out of the immediate vicinity of Palmyra, and afterward began recruiting locally, then by ca. A.D. 190 the original Palmyrene recruits would have retired and perhaps been replaced by Syrians and Mesopotamians like those on the unit rosters.<sup>66</sup>

Thus it is interesting that even *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, a unit originally recruited within the province of Syria, engaged in more localized recruitment after it was deployed elsewhere in the province. It is also interesting that the apparent broad ethnic division between legionaries of Greco-Macedonian origin and the Syrian/Mesopotamian auxiliaries of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* echoes an apparent division in the civilian population. The two most prominent groups in the city's population were Greco-Macedonians and Syrians or Mesopotamians—the former identifying themselves with the original colonists (whatever their actual descent), preserving at least some of their privileges and exclusivity into the Roman period; the latter the indigenous population of the area.<sup>67</sup> The former, the *Europaioi*, distinguished by Greek names, were prominent as political officeholders throughout the history of the city, including the period of Roman occupation, from the individuals named as priests and Helidoros the στρατηγός καὶ ἐπι[στάτης] [general and governor] mentioned in documents of A.D. 180 to Asclepiodotos, son of Athenodoros, the

<sup>66</sup> "Mithraic Graffiti from Dura Europos," in *Mithraic Studies*, ed. J.R. Hinnells (1975), 2:433).

<sup>66</sup> D.L. Kennedy, "*Cohors XX Palmyrenorum*: An Alternative Explanation of the Numeral," *ZPE* 53 (1983): 214–16, at 216; see also Welles, "The Population of Roman Dura," 271.

<sup>67</sup> See Welles, "The Population of Roman Dura," 261–65.

βουλευτής of A.D. 254.<sup>68</sup> The privileges of the Greco-Macedonian population may, however, have been eroded somewhat throughout the third century A.D.<sup>69</sup> While it may be something of an oversimplification, one can draw a broad distinction between these Greco-Macedonians and individuals with Semitic names, the latter representing the indigenous Aramaic/Syriac-speaking population. Josephus characterized the population of Parthian (formerly Seleucid) Seleucia on the Tigris as divided between “Greeks” and “Syrians,”<sup>70</sup> and it may not be unreasonable or inaccurate to apply such broad distinctions in Dura, another Seleucid colony in Mesopotamia.

It would also be significant if auxiliary units based at Dura with ethnics indicating an origin outside the region (e.g., from Thrace or Gaul) provided definitive evidence either of local recruitment or of the receipt of new drafts of recruits from the province of origin. Such individuals might have been perceived as more alien by local civilians. The following inscriptions provide evidence for individuals of other auxiliary cohorts.

- a. A Greek marriage contract on papyrus of a soldier of *cohors XII Palaestinorum*, Aurelius Alexander.<sup>71</sup> The nomen *Aurelius* suggests that he was a recent citizen, but the common Greek name does not tell us much about his origin.
- b. A painted Latin dedication to Jupiter and Minerva set up by Trebius Maximus, tribune of *cohors II Ulpia equitata*, on behalf of [Abri]eus Mocimus, who is described as *actarius* or *actuararius* (*n(umeri)? numerorum? numerarius?*), a clerical officer.<sup>72</sup> Trebius was a middle-ranking officer, and his Latin name is hardly surprising. [Abri]eus Mocimus appears to have been a noncitizen (the inscription probably predates the *Constitutio Antoniniana*), and his name may be Semitic in origin. He may have been a local recruit. However, as the editors indicate, his exact status and connection with the unit is unclear.
- c. A Greek dedication of A.D. 250/1 by members of *cohors II Paphlagonum*, Ulpius Iulianus (*princeps*, the highest ranking cen-

68. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 93–98, no. 17, 126–33, no. 25, 166–69, no. 32.

69. See Welles, “The Population of Roman Dura,” 255, 270, 273; *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 7–8.

70. Josephus *AJ* 18.374.

71. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 153–59, no. 30.

72. *Dura* 5, 226–29, no. 561.

- turion in the unit), Marinus, Zenodorus (an *optio*, or junior officer), and Faustianus.<sup>73</sup> These show a mixture of Latin and Greek names, some of which might be Paphlagonian, Syrian, or neither.
- d. A Greek dedication of A.D. 251–53 by Aurelius Lucius, *princeps cohortis* (senior centurion) of *cohors II equitata*, and his *optio*, Bassus.<sup>74</sup> Neither name is of very obvious origin.
  - e. A Greek papyrus contract of sale to a veteran of *cohors III Augusta Thracum*, Julius Demetrius, drawn up in the winter camp of that unit, and witnessed by the following junior officers (probably of that cohort): Flavius Serapio, Julius Diogenes, Claudius Theodorus, and Julius Mommus.<sup>75</sup> Most of the names combine an imperial nomen, indicating acquisition of citizenship by the officers' families in the first century A.D., with a Greek cognomen. They may have been Greco-Macedonians whose families gained citizenship some time previously, or they may have been descendants, born *castris* (in the camp), of original soldiers of the unit who gained citizenship because of their service. The last name is that of a *tubicen*, trumpet player, called Vepo Flavianus. As the editors point out, this is unusual, both in the ordering of the elements and because the name *Vepo* is rare, attested only in Noricum. The editors suggest it is Thracian. If so, this Vepo may be the descendant of an original Thracian recruit or a recent draftee from Thrace.

The only other name from Dura that may be specifically Thracian was painted on a fragment of plaster found in a building apparently used for accommodation of soldiers late in the history of the city.<sup>76</sup> It is Μακάπωρ/*Mucapor*.<sup>77</sup> On the same piece of plaster was *Oubaias*, a Semitic name, and *Di-*, perhaps the beginning of a Greek name. Another fragment had these same names together with *Males*, which the editors suggest was Palmyrene. If all the men named were soldiers in the same unit, it gives some idea of the possible ethnic diversity of recruits.

73. *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 110, no. 971.

74. *Ibid.*, 112–13, no. 972.

75. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 134–41, no. 26.

76. *Dura* 6, 241–43, nos. 725–26.

77. The Latin version of the name may be attested at Apamea on the tomb of a *duplicarius* of *legio II Parthica*, Septimius [M]ucapor (*IGLS* IV, 1371).

Graffiti in the headquarters (*praetorium*) provide a variety of names, mainly Latin and Greek in Greek letters, along with military references, such as unit titles. One unusual name that appears there is *Aphraates* (written in Greek letters), probably Iranian.<sup>78</sup> This man may have been a civilian, a slave, or a Roman auxiliary of Iranian descent. A papyrus letter written by a soldier with the name *Barthabbathas* (Aramaic) in Antioch to a centurion at Dura with the Greek name *Heliodorus* records the latter's father's name as *Orthonophates*, which appears Iranian.<sup>79</sup>

Thus our evidence regarding auxiliary recruitment to non-Palmyrene units is not strongly conclusive. Most inscriptions refer to officers, who tend to be more romanized or hellenized, and their names are fairly common Latin and (especially) Greek ones. There is only one possibly Semitic name, and there are two possibly Thracian names. The Thracian names may indicate the arrival of fresh drafts from the province in which the unit was raised or the retention of an ethnic name by a descendant of an original recruit. Either option implies separation of soldier from civilian, the former because of ethnic differences between Thracians and locals, the latter because it implies development of hereditary military service by a distinct, separate element in society.

To summarize the evidence of ethnicity and army recruitment to the mid-third century, it seems that as early as the Flavian period, a substantial proportion of legionaries recruited to the Roman army in Syria were Syrian in some sense, particularly individuals from the Greek cities of northern Syria and the Phoenician coastal cities, which were at least superficially hellenized (e.g., in language) by the early Principate. The deployment of legions on a long-term basis in and around hellenized cities, such as Zeugma, with a history of Greco-Macedonian military occupation may not have been as traumatic to the cities as if the legions had been composed primarily of Latin-speaking western soldiers. Individuals from southern Syria (probably including ethnic Arabs and less-hellenized individuals in general) and from northern Arabia increasingly were recruited into the legions through the second and third centuries A.D. as Roman control of those areas became more secure. Legions deployed in those areas seem to have had a high proportion of local recruits by the early third century, if we can trust the limited evidence.

It is difficult to be certain of the ethnic composition of the auxiliary

78. *Dura* 5, 234, no. 590.

79. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 183–85, no. 46.

forces at any given time, but general trends are clear. Initially many units were recruited in Thrace and in Balkan and western provinces, and individual western soldiers were common in those units at least into the early second century. It is unclear to what degree new drafts of troops from the west were received subsequently. However, there is some doubt how much Cheesman's theory of local recruiting as early as the late first century applies to eastern provinces. From Trajan's reign onward, we see increased recruitment of whole units from eastern frontier provinces for service in the same region. Many units known from Syria bearing the title *Ulpia* clearly were raised in Syria or Arabia, as is shown by their ethnics (*Petraeorum*) or equipment (*dromedariorum*, *sagittariorum*), and some of the other units *Ulpiae* without such designations may be assumed to be of eastern origin. Probably a substantial number of Trajanic troops were "Arabs" (in Shahîd's broad sense of the term), suited to the control of other Arab populations and desert regions in southern Syria and Mesopotamia.<sup>80</sup> The attested use of Palmyrene troops from the second century is another example of the recruitment of local troops to suit particular local needs. The evidence from Dura-Europos suggests that the main unit of the auxiliary garrison there, *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, had taken on a strongly local character by the early third century.

The impact of the acquisition of Mesopotamia as a new recruiting ground is unclear. Certainly troops raised there served as auxiliaries in the Roman army elsewhere, and one might assume that they were employed in their home provinces too, given the general evidence of local recruitment at that time.<sup>81</sup> The only auxiliary unit known from Mesopotamia in this period is the *cohors IX Maurorum*, at Hatra in A.D. 235.<sup>82</sup> An intriguing inscription that provides some indication of how far afield Roman recruitment may have stretched is a bilingual Greek and Aramaic text from Tilli, a site on the Tigris, well to the north of Roman Mesopotamia. It is a dedication to Zeus Olympius Marahalle by Antonius Domitianus, a Roman veteran.<sup>83</sup> It lacks a calendar date, but the editors

80. While auxiliaries raised from "Arab" ethnic groups may have been "local" in the sense of from the region, they were distinct from most urban populations, and their appearance in urban garrisons may have been quite traumatic. However, to a great degree they seem to have been employed controlling other Arabs in desert areas.

81. Osrhoeni were in Severus Alexander's Rhine army (Herodian 6.7.8), and Mesopotamians were used against Goths by Aurelian (*HA*, V. *Aurel.* 11.3).

82. See Oates, "A Note on Three Latin Inscriptions from Hatra."

83. C.S. Lightfoot and J.F. Healey, "A Roman Veteran on the Tigris," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 17 (1991): 1-7.

suggest that such recruitment is most likely to have taken place during the Severan period or (less likely) during Trajan's Parthian war. The inscription does not indicate whether he was an auxiliary, a mercenary outside the regular organization of the army, or even a legionary. The editors also assume, quite reasonably, that he was a local who had retired to his place of birth. However, given our very limited knowledge of the practical limits of Roman power in this area, it is possible that he had been recruited elsewhere and had been settled in this extreme frontier area on his retirement.

While there was much local recruitment into legionary and auxiliary units by the second century, concentrations of foreign troops still arrived frequently in the second and third centuries A.D. as vexillationary expeditionary forces for major wars. The best example is *legio II Parthica*, recruited mostly in the Balkans and based at Apamea for considerable periods. Gothic *gentiles* (tribesmen) served in Arabia by A.D. 208 and may have fought for the Romans in the Parthian wars of Caracalla and even Septimius Severus.<sup>84</sup> When Aurelian defeated the Palmyrenes, he did so with troops from Balkan provinces (Dalmatian cavalry and probably *legio I Illyricorum*) and other western provinces (Moorish cavalry), many of which remained in the region.<sup>85</sup> The *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* lists, in traditional Iranian fashion, the places of origin of soldiers in the Roman army defeated by the Persians in A.D. 260. While stating that a legionary vexillation or auxiliary cohort came from Germany is not quite the same as establishing its ethnic composition, the list gives some idea of how polyglot an eastern Roman army might seem to a foreign observer. The list records troops from Germany, Rhaetia, Noricum, Dacia, Pannonia, Moesia, Istria, Spain, Mauretania, Thrace, Bithynia, Asia, Pamphylia, Isauria, Lycaonia, Galatia, Lycia, Cilicia, Cappadocia, Syria, Phoenicia, Judaea, Arabia, Lydia, and Mesopotamia.<sup>86</sup>

### Language Use in Military and Civilian Contexts in the First to Third Centuries A.D.

As I mentioned earlier, language use is a cultural activity that may act as a marker for ethnicity. Much of the preceding discussion is based on the

84. See M.P. Speidel, "The Roman Army in Arabia," in *Roman Army Studies* (1984), 1:254–58.

85. Zosimus 1.52.3–4 describes Aurelian's army.

86. *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* (ed. Maricq), 19–23.

assumption that an individual's name (derived at last in part from his or her community's language preferences) had some significance for ethnic, cultural, or judicial/political identity. Next, one may examine broader evidence for language use in the region, particularly by soldiers, to see if this separated the army from the civilian population or, conversely, facilitated social links between the two.

The best evidence comes from Dura-Europos, where we can observe the interaction of Latin, Greek, and Semitic languages (such as Aramaic, Syriac, and Palmyrene) in written form at least, through informal texts, such as graffiti, as well as through more formal documents, such as inscriptions and papyri.

In a civilian community that spoke mostly Greek and Semitic languages (Aramaic, Syriac, and perhaps Palmyrene), widespread use of Latin among soldiers would have separated them from civilians. In fact, written Latin was rarely used outside formal military contexts. Most papyrus documents relating to the administration of the army at Dura were Latin, as were a number of inscribed group dedications. Typical of these are building inscriptions of the "Temple of the Roman Archers," the amphitheater, and the later reconstruction of the *mithraeum* by legionaries.<sup>87</sup> Few inscriptions in Latin might be defined as private, exceptions being a centurion's epitaph and a pair of dedications by a *librarius*, *adiutores*, and an *actarius* from the headquarters (the so-called *praetorium*—technically the *principia*).<sup>88</sup> The individuals in these inscriptions had to be literate in Latin for their duties, and the location of the dedications made them, in some sense, public. A painted inscription in a house apparently used as a soldiers' billet is bilingual in Latin and Greek,<sup>89</sup> but informal painted texts and graffiti otherwise tend to consist of simple names, titles, and slogans (such as *victoria*) that might be picked up by individual soldiers not fully literate in Latin. Thus, while formal use of Latin by the army at Dura distinguished it from the civilian population and emphasized its character as an institution, it seems that individual soldiers' use of Latin in private contexts was not sufficient to mark them out from civilians.

Greek was the private language of the eastern Roman army, and while it was used in some army administrative documents (as in some

87. *Dura* 2, 83–86, H1; *Dura* 6, 77–80, no. 630 (A.D. 216); *Dura* 7/8, 85–87, no. 847 (A.D. 209–11).

88. *Dura* 1, 49, no. 4; *Dura* 5, 224–29, nos. 560–61.

89. *Dura* 6, 176–78, no. 696.

sections of *P.Dura* 66 [= Fink 89]), at Dura it was used by soldiers mainly in private contexts. Greek was used in most religious dedications by individuals or small groups, such as those to Iarhibol by Scribonius Mucianus, to Zeus Betylos by Aurelius Diphilianus, and to Zeus Megistos Dolicheus by a *princeps* and an *optio* of an auxiliary cohort.<sup>90</sup> Most informal inscriptions and graffiti are in Greek or Greek letters, including Latin, Greek, and Semitic personal names, such as Ἀυτο-ἡλι(ο)ς Ἀντωνεῖνος, Ἡλιόδωρος, and Ῥαββουλᾶ, all of which include a transliterated Latin military title, βενεφικιάριος or στάτωρ.<sup>91</sup> As elsewhere in the east, Latin military terminology was transliterated into Greek in informal texts, so we find οὐρηξίλλατιῶναν for *vexillationem* and κοντοβερνάλοι for *contubernales*.<sup>92</sup> Soldiers' use of Latin in formal contexts and Greek in private, informal contexts appears to cut across distinctions of rank and legionary and auxiliary status.

Widespread private use of Greek by Roman soldiers facilitated communication with the Greek-speaking population of Dura, but how well did they communicate with the Semitic population? Perhaps when soldiers of Mesopotamian origin who spoke Aramaic or Syriac as a first language joined the army, they there began to use Greek more frequently. This would distinguish them from former kin who remained civilians, and such a change in language preference would be a mark of the degree to which the army institutionalized recruits. In fact, it seems that civilians in Roman Dura who bore Semitic names either were bilingual in Aramaic/Syriac and Greek or preferred Greek, at least as a written language. There are very few documents, inscriptions, or graffiti in Aramaic or Syriac. Among inscriptions that belonged to the Roman period, Kilpatrick counted 439 Greek, 68 Latin, 7 Palmyrene, 3 Syriac, and 1 Aramaic.<sup>93</sup> Most Aramaic graffiti or inscriptions come from the synagogue, where murals were labeled in that language.<sup>94</sup> Otherwise, even civilian dedications to Mesopotamian deities by individuals with Semitic names are in Greek, from the Parthian period through the Roman occupation. A Parthian example is a Greek dedication to Aphlad, "god of the village of Anath on the Euphrates," by Adadiabos, son of Zabdibolos.<sup>95</sup> Semitic

90. *Dura* 2, 90–91, H3; *Dura* 4, 68–71, no. 168; *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 110–11, no. 971.

91. *Dura* 1, 33–37, R2, R10, R11.

92. *Dura* 5, 161, no. 483 and 39–40, no. 401.

93. G.D. Kilpatrick, "Dura-Europos: The Parchments and Papyri," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 5 (1964): 215–25, at 217.

94. *Dura* 6, 391–96.

95. *Dura* 5, 112, no. 416.

names and civilian texts, such as lists of commodities from the “House of Nebuchelus,” are in Greek.<sup>96</sup>

Thus, on the basis of the written evidence from Dura, it does not seem that there was much of a language gap between soldiers and civilians. Latin was used only in formal military contexts, although soldiers’ use of it in those contexts undoubtedly emphasized the nature of the army as a distinct, separate institution, “Roman” in some sense. Greek seems to have been the primary written language of soldiers *and* civilians. If this pattern was representative of spoken language too, soldiers would not have been marked out by language use. However, spoken language preferences might have been different. For example, Mesopotamian soldiers and/or civilians perhaps spoke Aramaic while being primarily literate in Greek.<sup>97</sup> Or perhaps soldiers spoke Greek with fellow soldiers, while most Aramaic-speaking civilians were illiterate in all languages and hence unable to record their language preference in even the simplest graffito. The complexities of the relationship of written and spoken languages make it difficult to determine whether language use was a defining cultural characteristic of the army at Dura, beyond its use of Latin in some contexts.

Evidence from elsewhere in the region is much less detailed but tends to support the basic scheme of Latin as the formal, external language of the army and of Greek as the private language of soldiers, while the importance of Semitic languages remains unclear. Many soldiers’ epitaphs are in Latin, despite their quasi-personal character. This is not really surprising in such units as *legio II Parthica*, with Balkan soldiers and Italian associations. Presumably, members of such units, brought into the region for temporary service, used Latin on a private, as well as a formal, level and hence would have been linguistically intrusive in Greek Apamea. It is a little more surprising that the epitaph of Marcus Gora, the Emesene *signifer* of *cohors I Ascalonitanorum*, was in Latin.<sup>98</sup> Despite his

96. *Dura* 4, 79–145. This leaves aside the issue of Palmyrene, used in a number of inscriptions from Dura. Some relate to the pre-Roman and early Roman garrison of Palmyrene troops, and many are bilingual Palmyrene and Greek texts. Some inscriptions were set up by Palmyrenes in Greek. It seems that Palmyrenes in Dura were bilingual in Palmyrene and Greek (at least in written texts), as soldiers and civilians of Aramaic-speaking origin were bilingual in Aramaic and Greek.

97. A cautionary piece of evidence is the graffito (civilian and not necessarily of the Roman period) published by Cumont (*Fouilles*, 367–68, no. 11) that transliterates an Aramaic phrase into Greek letters. Perhaps the writer regularly spoke Aramaic but could only write in Greek.

98. Gatier, “Une Inscription latine du moyen-Euphrate.”

Latin praenomen, we might expect him and his colleagues to have preferred Greek. Soldiers of eastern legions who died in Apamene and at Cyrrhus, respectively, received Greek epitaphs from, in the first instance, a brother who was also a serving soldier and, in the second instance, a wife.<sup>99</sup>

A few bilingual (Latin/Greek) inscriptions involve soldiers. The least expected is the epitaph (from Apamea) of Baebius Severus, an Italian (*civis Perusinus*) catapult operator of *legio II Parthica*.<sup>100</sup> We might expect his funerary inscription to be Latin, and it is not clear whether the Greek part of the text was due to the general Greek cultural environment or the wishes of Greek-speaking friends or family.

Finally, there is a single text bilingual in Greek and Aramaic, the (Trajanic or Severan?) dedication to Zeus Olympius Marahalle by a Roman veteran at Tilli on the Tigris.<sup>101</sup> The selection of languages may relate to religious appropriateness (syncretism of a local cult with a Greek one) and suggests that both languages had some cultural significance to the individual concerned.

### Ethnicity and Recruitment in the Eastern Armies of the Later Roman Empire

As I have already noted, there are virtually no inscriptions from Syria and Mesopotamia providing information on the composition of the armies in those provinces after the first half of the third century A.D. Most evidence for the fourth and fifth centuries comes from the *Notitia Dignitatum* and Ammianus' account of wars in the reigns of Constantius II and Julian.

Given local recruitment evident as early as the second and third centuries A.D., it is likely that the legions of the frontier provinces listed in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (*III Gallica* and *I Illyricorum* in Phoenice, *III Scythica* and *XVI Flavia Firma* in Syria, *IV Parthica* in Osroene, and *I* and *II Parthica* in Mesopotamia) were recruited on that basis. It appears that many units of the frontier provinces, the *limitanei*, under commanders called *duces*, had developed a strongly territorial character by this time, even if they were not strictly peasant soldiers tied to their land as

99. *IGLS* IV, 1804; *IGRR* III, 1004.

100. *AE* 1993, 1584 (= Balty and van Rengen, *Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica*, 37 and pl. 14).

101. Lightfoot and Healey, "A Roman Veteran on the Tigris."

some historians suggested.<sup>102</sup> It is probable that much of this recruitment was not strictly local in the sense of being from the civilian population at large but was from the families of veterans, a tendency that appeared in the second century and was strengthened in the third century by the allocation of lands in frontier areas to veterans on condition that their sons serve.<sup>103</sup> The hereditary nature of military service by the fourth century is shown by provisions of the Theodosian Code requiring enlistment of able-bodied sons of veterans.<sup>104</sup> Local recruitment from individuals already connected with the army undoubtedly did more to emphasize institutional separation of the army over connections with the local population. Auxiliary units raised abroad but deployed in the region for a long period probably recruited on a similar basis. These included *cohors I Ulpia Dacorum*, *ala II Paphlagonum*, *cohors I Gaetulorum*,<sup>105</sup> and even the *equites Illyriciani*, with such ethnics as *Dalmatae* and *Mauri*, brought to the region by Aurelian. There is no evidence that these retained a distinctive ethnic character, and it would have been easy to recruit from veterans' families and from the abundant sources of light cavalry already available in the east.

Another group of units listed in the *Notitia Dignitatum* are new units recruited in the east and designated by ethnics and the term *indigenae* (local), mainly *equites indigenae* (local cavalry) of various kinds. Shahîd listed those he considers to have been recruited from ethnic Arabs.<sup>106</sup> These included a specifically Arab unit (*cohors quinquagenaria Arabum*) in Mesopotamia and various units described as *Saraceni* in Phoenice.<sup>107</sup> He suggests that many *equites indigenae* lacking specific ethnic designations were Arabs, based on their function as light cavalry scouts and horse archers (traditional to Arab peoples) and on their deployment in areas with substantial nomadic populations. The *equites [sagittarii indigenae] primi Osrhoeni* may have been recruited from the Arab population of Osrhoene.<sup>108</sup>

102. For the most detailed development of the thesis of the "peasant soldier," see MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian*. Contra, see Isaac, "The Meaning of the Terms *Limes* and *Limitanei*."

103. See Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*, 65–67.

104. *C.Th.* 8.22.1 (A.D. 313, 319), reiterated through the century in *C.Th.* 8.22.2, 7, 8, and 9.

105. See *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 33.33, 35.29, 35.32.

106. Shahîd, *Rome and the Arabs*, 51–63.

107. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 36.35, 32.27, 32.28.

108. See *ibid.*, 35.23.

Other units unknown before the *Notitia Dignitatum* have ethnic or geographical titles indicating where they were recruited or stationed or both. These include *ala I Damascena* and *ala I Foenicum* in Phoenice,<sup>109</sup> *cohors I Euphratensis* and *ala I Parthorum* in Osrhoene,<sup>110</sup> and *ala XV Carduenorum* and *cohors XIV Valeria Zabdenorum* in Mesopotamia.<sup>111</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus reports *Zabdiceni* archers at Singara in A.D. 360 and *Transtigritani* at Amida in A.D. 359.<sup>112</sup>

Also present in the east were units with names suggesting recruitment from western barbarians, most probably in the reigns of Constantine, Constantius II, and Julian, although Goths at least seem to have served from the early third century.<sup>113</sup> They are listed in the *Notitia Dignitatum* as *ala I Francorum*, *ala I Alamannorum*, *ala I Saxonum*, and *cohors V pacata Alamannorum* in Phoenice;<sup>114</sup> *ala I Iuthungorum* and *cohors I Gotthorum* in Syria;<sup>115</sup> and *ala VIII Flavia Francorum* in Mesopotamia.<sup>116</sup> Perhaps these troops retained a distinctive ethnic identity, as they had been recruited recently for their high fighting quality and it would have been desirable for those qualities to be maintained as long as western recruiting grounds were open to eastern emperors.

There is little detailed information available regarding the composition of the *comitatus* that served in the east. It is interesting to note that some senior commanders at Antioch named by Libanius had foreign origins, including Richomeres, a Frank. At this period, in contrast to the Principate, such individuals retained distinctive ethnic names rather than assuming Roman ones.<sup>117</sup> Such high-level appointment of western barbarians and others from the fringes of and from outside the empire may be indicative of the composition of their troops. Some units have ethnics, including western tribal names found in *comitatus* of the *magistri militum praesentales* based at Constantinople,<sup>118</sup> the *comites sagittarii Armeni* commanded by one of them,<sup>119</sup> and the *equites IV clibanarii Parthi*,

109. See *ibid.*, 32.33, 38.

110. See *ibid.*, 36.33, 30.

111. See *ibid.*, 36.34, 36.

112. Ammianus Marcellinus 20.7.1, 19.9.2.

113. See Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops*, 7, 16.

114. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 32.35, 36, 37, 41.

115. *Ibid.*, 33.31, 32.

116. *Ibid.*, 36.33.

117. Liebeschuetz, in *Antioch*, 114, lists them. For Richomeres at Antioch, see Libanius Or. 1.219–20.

118. See *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 5–6.

119. See *ibid.*, 6.31.

*cuneus equitum II clibanariorum Palmirenorum*, and *Transtigritani* of the *comitatus* of the *magister militum per Orientem*.<sup>120</sup> The eastern provinces could draw on a range of peoples with warlike reputations, including Isaurians, Goths, and Thracians; and at certain times, such as the reigns of Constantius and Julian, they could also draw on western recruiting grounds. For example, in A.D. 359 Amida's defenders included the Magmentian and Decentian legions, recently arrived from Gaul, and perhaps of Gaulish origin.<sup>121</sup>

Also prominent are *Saraceni*, Arabs allied to Romans (or Persians) as *foederati*, fighting under their own leaders and inhabiting frontier areas. They are mentioned by ancient authors from the fourth century onward but were particularly important from the rise of the Ghassanid confederacy in the sixth century.<sup>122</sup> This was one way in which locally recruited troops were used by Romans to defend areas familiar to them, but at the cost of the loss of direct political control over the areas in question.

Thus there are several distinct themes in the cultural and social relationship between soldiers and civilians in the fourth and fifth centuries, with apparently contradictory implications. One theme is the increasing separation of soldiers from the wider civilian population in terms of legal and economic privileges (including tax exemptions) and social status and by increasingly hereditary recruitment, which made the army an even more separate institution and a self-perpetuating one. A second theme is highly local territorial recruitment of many frontier troops. This limited ethnic and linguistic distinctions between soldiers and civilians, and the long-term stationing of the same units in the same areas (including specific cities) enhanced potential for social links between soldier and civilian. A third theme is the introduction of large concentrations of unromanized foreign troops, including western barbarians, specifically chosen for warlike qualities. While fortress cities perhaps became accustomed to their permanent garrisons, the arrival and billeting of large numbers of aliens was potentially traumatic to a city. The suffering of Edessa at the hands of Gothic troops in the reign of

120. See *ibid.*, 7.32, 34, 58.

121. See Ammianus Marcellinus 19.5.2. They are referred to as *Galli milites* at 19.6.3. They may have been guard units of the usurpers Magnentius and Decentius and hence not typical of regular recruitment patterns.

122. Saracen *foederati* are discussed in more detail in Isaac, *Limits*, 235–49, and in I. Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth Century* (1984), especially 465–519, and *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century* (1989), 459–86.

Anastasius described in the *Chronicle* of Joshua the Stylite is evidence of that.<sup>123</sup>

### Religious Interaction between Soldiers and Civilians

The next question is whether the Roman army in Syria and Mesopotamia shared religious practices with the civilian population of those provinces. Doing so might have promoted common feeling. If the two groups participated in separate cults, this perhaps increased the gap between them. Did soldiers maintain cults that were in some sense typically “Roman,” or did they worship gods perceived as “native”? Were troops outsiders who assimilated and adopted local gods as their own, or were they locals in origin who kept their own religious practices? Examining these questions requires study of religious dedications from all over the region and particularly detailed evidence of cult practice from Dura-Europos. Similar questions can be asked of the period when Christianity was the official religion of the Roman state. One might examine evidence for doctrinal differences between Christian soldiers and civilians, the social status of soldiers in eastern Christianity, and the relationship of the army and defense with Christian institutions and leaders.

### The Roman Army and Religion at Dura-Europos

The best evidence for religious interrelationships of soldiers and civilians in the region comes from Dura-Europos. In chapter 1 the use of sanctuaries by the army and by the civilian population of Dura was examined, but one may examine particular cults and dedications in more detail to draw more specific conclusions. Essentially the evidence for religious activities of the army breaks down into three categories. These are (1) the *feriale Duranum* and Roman state religion, (2) nontraditional cults exclusive to the army, and (3) military participation in other, “local” cults.

The *feriale Duranum* is a papyrus calendar, dated to ca. A.D. 224–35, found in the Temple of Azzanathkona with records of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*.<sup>124</sup> It lists identities and festivals to be observed and the ritual

123. Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* (ed. Wright), 86, 92–96.

124. The original publication was in R.O. Fink, A.S. Hoey, and W.S. Snyder, “The *Feriale Duranum*,” *Yale Classical Studies* 7 (1940): 1–222, with republication in *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 191–212, no. 54. Important subsequent articles include A.D. Nock, “The Roman Army and the Roman Religious Year,” *Harvard Theological Review* 45 (1952):

act appropriate to the occasion—prayer or sacrifice. Traditional Roman and Italian festivals, such as the Saturnalia, Vestalia, Natalis Martis, and Natalis Urbis Romae, form one category, which excludes even well-established foreign cults, such as that of Magna Mater. As MacMullen has written, “the gods actually honored are just what one would have expected in a Roman-citizen setting two or three hundred years earlier, that is, the Capitoline triad, Mars and Vesta (!) with a few old Italian or Roman municipal holidays.”<sup>125</sup> There are also festivals of the imperial cult, the *natales* of the deified members of the imperial family and the *dies imperii* of other, more recent emperors. There are a few specifically military festivals, such as the *rosaliae signorum*, associated with military standards. Most scholars who have worked on the *feriale Duranum* believe it is a calendar of festivals to be observed by the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, of Augustan origin, from a time when legions were primarily Italian. This survived in a Severan redaction and perhaps was a standardized calendar applicable to military units all over the empire.<sup>126</sup>

Whatever the original intent of the document regarding “romanization” of soldiers’ religious practices, it is clear that the cults listed bear no resemblance to those of private soldiers’ dedications at Dura. The festivals of the *feriale* perhaps imposed a nominal romanity of a corporate nature. As Gilliam wrote, these holidays, the soldier’s often limited and nominal use of Latin, and his uniform “helped serve to distinguish him from civilians and remind him that he was a Roman soldier.”<sup>127</sup>

Other evidence from Dura of “corporate” observance of certain religious rites by the army is provided by a mural from the Temple of Bel, also known as the Temple of the Palmyrene Gods. This depicts a group of uniformed individuals headed by a figure labeled as Iulius Terentius, tribune of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*. He is offering incense to three figures in military costume on pedestals. Two other figures, labeled as the *tychai*

187–252; J.F. Gilliam, “The Roman Military Feriale,” *Harvard Theological Review* 47 (1954): 183–96; and D. Fishwick, “Dated Inscriptions and the *Feriale Duranum*,” *Syria* 65 (1988): 349–61.

125. R. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (1981), 110. A number of comparably traditional Italian deities were worshiped at Berytus. See Millar, *Roman Near East*, 280–81.

126. E.g., see Gilliam, “The Roman Military Feriale,” 184–85. MacMullen (*Paganism*, 110) disputes the universal character of the calendar, but the traditional view is upheld by Fishwick (“Dated Inscriptions”), who has compiled evidence for observance of the festivals listed in the *feriale Duranum* by units elsewhere.

127. Gilliam, “The Roman Military Feriale,” 186.

of Dura and Palmyra, are below them.<sup>128</sup> The traditional view is that the uniformed figures represent statues of three Palmyrene gods.<sup>129</sup> It is not surprising to find Palmyrene gods worshiped by a unit of Palmyrene origin, and other Palmyrene deities received cult at Dura in civilian contexts. This suggests religious solidarity between soldiers and civilians. However, Pékárý has argued convincingly that the paintings represent an offering before imperial statues, perhaps of Pupienus, Balbinus, and Gordian III.<sup>130</sup> If so, the mural shows the unit participating in corporate worship, making an offering connected with the imperial cult, like those listed in the *feriale Duranum*. This emphasizes the association between army and central government, and it thus emphasizes religious separation of soldier and civilian. Of course, civilians at Dura participated in the imperial cult too, but the Dura mural suggests that the two groups did so separately. Also, there were military priests at Dura-Europos. This mural names “Themes, son of Mokimos, priest,” and he is listed as a priest in the papyrus rolls of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*.<sup>131</sup> Whatever his exact function, it is clear he was closely associated with the unit. Similarly, there are references to “legionary priests” at Dura,<sup>132</sup> as elsewhere in the later empire.

The next level of soldiers’ religious practices at Dura-Europos comprises cults not sanctioned officially in the *feriale Duranum* but observed apparently exclusively by soldiers at Dura. These were the cults of Mithras and Jupiter Dolichenus, with well-known ties to the Roman army elsewhere in the empire. The first phase of the *mithraeum* at Dura-Europos was used by Palmyrene archers of the earliest Roman-period garrison.<sup>133</sup> A *tauroktonos* bas-relief was dedicated in A.D. 168 by Ethpeni, commander of the archers at Dura (inscribed in Greek and Palmyrene); and a later holder of the same office, Zenobius, set up a Greek dedication in A.D. 170/1.<sup>134</sup> The second phase was a rebuilding by a vexillation of *legiones IIII Scythica* and *XVI Flavia Firma*, under Anto-

128. The murals are discussed and illustrated in Cumont, *Fouilles*, 89–114, pls. xlix–li.

129. See *ibid.*; Rostovtzeff, *Dura-Europos and Its Art*, 72 (Palmyrene triad); J. Teixidor, *The Pantheon of Palmyra* (1979), 94 (unidentified but probably Iarhibol, Bel, and Aglibol); Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture*, 108 (Iarhibol, Aglibol, and Arsu?).

130. T. Pékárý, “Das Opfer vor dem Kaiserbild,” *BjB* 186 (1986): 91–93.

131. Cumont, *Fouilles*, 94 and 363, no. 8a; *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 281–86, no. 89.

132. Cumont, *Fouilles*, 375–77.

133. See *Dura* 7/8, 62–134; F. Cumont, “The Dura Mithraeum,” in *Mithraic Studies*, ed. J.R. Hinnells (1975), 1:151–214.

134. *Dura* 7/8, 83, no. 845; 84, no. 846.

nius Valentius, *princeps* (high-ranking centurion).<sup>135</sup> The walls of the sanctuary were covered with graffiti written by worshipers, mainly military and cult titles and names like those found in the rolls of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*.<sup>136</sup> These suggest that Mithraism at Dura was a purely military cult.

Despite theories regarding the spread of Mithraism from the east, there is no evidence of the cult in Dura before the dedications of Palmyrene officers, none from Palmyra, and very little from Syria in general.<sup>137</sup> The inscription found below the earliest phase of the Dura *mithraeum* refers to restoration of temple doors by the pre-Roman inhabitants after Trajan's attack on the city, but it does not indicate specifically that this early temple was a *mithraeum*. Mithraism had strong (but not exclusive) associations with the Roman army elsewhere, including on the Danube and Rhine frontiers, where it flourished long before the earliest dedications at Dura.<sup>138</sup> Francis' theory that Mithraism was picked up by officers of Palmyrene *numeri* based on the Danube frontier and brought to Dura as a specifically military cult is attractive (see n. 136). The middle phase of the *mithraeum* shows legionary participation and labor and, hence, perhaps semiofficial favor. Mithraism at Dura was not a local civilian cult adopted by soldiers, or even an eastern cult practiced by eastern soldiers, but a military cult adopted from other soldiers.

The *dolicheneum* was the only temple constructed in the Roman period to follow the courtyard form typical of earlier temples in Dura.<sup>139</sup> Jupiter Dolichenus, the principal god worshiped there, was eastern in origin and came from Doliche in Cappadocia, between Zeugma and Samosata. However, there is no evidence for pre-Roman worship of Jupiter Dolichenus at Dura, and there is no evidence that anyone unconnected with the army ever participated in the cult there in the Roman period. A Latin dedication to *I(uppiter) O(ptimus) M(aximus) D(olichenus)* was set up in A.D. 211 by Agatocles, a freedman of M. Antonius Valentinus, apparently the same *princeps* who oversaw the reconstruction of the *mithraeum*, for his patron's safety.<sup>140</sup> Dedications from the temple, mostly Greek, by legionaries

135. See *ibid.*, 85, no. 847.

136. See Francis, "Mithraic Graffiti from Dura Europus."

137. See C.M. Daniels, "The Role of the Roman Army in the Spread and Practice of Mithraism," in *Mithraic Studies*, ed. J.R. Hinnells (1975), 2:272f.

138. See *ibid.*, 430–31.

139. Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture*, 123. The temple is described in *ibid.*, 122–24, and in *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 97–134.

140. *Dura* 9, pt. 3, 107, no. 970.

and auxiliaries, name several gods, principally Zeus μέγιστος καὶ θεὸς Δολιχαῖος [the greatest and the god of Doliche] and Turmasgade, a little-known, possibly also Commagenian deity.<sup>141</sup>

Like Mithras, Dolichenus had very strong (but not exclusive) connections with the Roman army, and he is found elsewhere in the empire long before the temple at Dura was built.<sup>142</sup> The cult may have been picked up from other troops who moved to Dura; or perhaps legionaries of *legio XVI Flavia Firma*, normally based at Samosata in Commagene, brought the cult directly from its area of origin. A papyrus morning report of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* emphasizes the god's military associations as it records his name as the day's watchword.<sup>143</sup>

Ultimately the cults of Mithras and Jupiter Dolichenus at Dura may have had eastern origins, but their character was military, strongly so in much of the empire, and apparently exclusively so at Dura. They arrived at Dura with soldiers, paradoxically from provinces further west. Observance of these cults emphasized separation of civilian and military, and while the *feriale Duranum* provides evidence of the corporate solidarity of the army at Dura, these cults show the private solidarity of soldiers.

There are few other dedications by soldiers from Dura-Europos.<sup>144</sup> One is an altar found in the Temple of the Palmyrene Gods/Bel, dedicated in Greek by a soldier of *legio IIII Scythica* to Zeus Betylos, described as "god of those by the Orontes" and the soldier's ancestral (πατρῴος) god.<sup>145</sup> This is not surprising, as the legion recruited from northern Syria. The soldier, Aurelius Diphilanius, has a Greek name and seems to be an "outsider" from northern Syria bringing his own god to Dura. Another dedication was made by soldiers of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* in the Temple of the Gaddé.<sup>146</sup> The Latin inscription comes from a broken

141. Ibid., 133.

142. A useful study is M.P. Speidel, *The Religion of Iuppiter Dolichenus in the Roman Army* (1978). The earliest record outside Commagene is in A.D. 125/6 (CIL VIII, 2680, Lambaesis).

143. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 281–86, no. 89, i.13 (= Fink, *Roman Military Records*, 50).

144. A dedication to Atargatis (*Dura* 3, 43, no. 145) was made by a *legatus Augusti* and as such does not really shed light on the religious practices of the army in general.

145. *Dura* 4, 68–71, no. 168; Millar, *Roman Near East*, 1–15 passim. "Ancestral" is Millar's suggested translation. He also provides a useful discussion of the term *Betylos* and its relation to the term *betyl*, designating a cult object. However, his suggestion (op. cit., 6, 15) that "those by the Orontes" is a formulation of identity for the whole region may be stretching a simple geographical label too far.

146. *Dura* 7/8, 277, no. 906.

statue base, and it is not clear to which deity it was dedicated. The editors suggest that it may have related to the imperial cult rather than to the Palmyrene gods worshiped in the temple. The Palmyrene gods seem to have been Malakbel and the Gads (tutelary deities) of Dura and Palmyra, and it is clear from inscriptions and graffiti that the temple was heavily used by Palmyrene civilian residents and travelers and predated the Roman occupation of the city. Again, it is hardly surprising to find soldiers of a nominally Palmyrene unit making use of a temple dedicated to their “native” gods. Finally, there is the “Military Temple,” otherwise known as the “Temple of the Roman Archers,” which, as an inscription attests, was built by soldiers of *cohors II Ulpia equitata civium Romanorum sagittariorum*.<sup>147</sup> As Susan Downey notes, the plan of this building was unlike any other Durene religious architecture, approximating, instead, that of a simple Roman temple.<sup>148</sup> There is no indication of the deity to which it was dedicated, but the plan and the use of military labor may indicate a military or “Roman” cult rather than a “native” one.

#### Evidence from Elsewhere in Syria and Mesopotamia

As I have already shown, evidence from Dura indicates separation of soldiers and civilians in choice of religious cults. There is relatively little evidence from elsewhere in the region. Some inscriptions from Berytus and Heliopolis attest the participation of soldiers and veterans (among many more civilians) in local cults of Zeus Baalmarcod at Der-el Kala and Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus at Heliopolis.<sup>149</sup> Despite frequent assertions of the local origins of the latter, the evidence for the cult as truly Phoenician or Syrian in character in the Roman period is very limited.<sup>150</sup> Whatever the nature of these cults, one cannot generalize on the religious activity of the army as a whole on the basis of these dedications. Berytus and Heliopolis were unusual because of their history of Italian veteran settlement, and one might expect the settlers to develop

147. *Dura* 2, 83–86, H1.

148. Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture*, 124.

149. Those specific to soldiers and veterans of the Syrian legions are *IGLS* VI, 2711–12 (from Heliopolis, a dedication in Latin to Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, Venus, and Mars by Aurelius Antonius Longinus of *legio III Gallica*, A.D. 212–17), an inscription cited with *CIL* III, 155 for comparative purposes (in Paris, probably from Berytus), which is a Latin dedication to Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Baimarcod by M. Verginius Bassus of *legio IIII Scythica*.

150. See Millar, *Roman Near East*, 280–85; “The Roman *Coloniae*,” 20f.

cult centers for their own use. It is not particularly unusual that they made use of existing centers. At least in the case of Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus, any syncretism that may have taken place was heavily dominated by the Roman component of the god's identity. This is not evidence of a real assimilation by army personnel or veterans of a native cult. The only truly exotic dedications by Roman soldiers—actually veterans—from this region are from Niha in the Beqa'. These are a dedication in Latin by S. Allius Iullus to Hochmaea, the virgin prophetess of Dea Syria of Niha (repeated in Greek, with the name of Atargatis replacing that of Dea Syria),<sup>151</sup> and the dedication to Zeus Olympius Marahalle from Tilli on the Tigris.

Otherwise, information regarding the religious practices of Roman soldiers in Syria and Mesopotamia rests on scattered dedications, few in number compared to the evidence for civilian participation in Syrian cults elsewhere in the empire. The saluting of the sun by soldiers of *legio III Gallica* at the battle of Bedriacum/Cremona in A.D. 69, which Tacitus describes as being "according to Syrian custom," may have been a rite related to a sun cult, such as that known as *Sol Invictus* by the Romans.<sup>152</sup> *Sol Invictus*, described as *religio loci* ["the cult of this place"], was the recipient of a Latin dedication by a Roman military tribune at Hatra in the second quarter of the third century.<sup>153</sup> In Aurelian's reign, sun worship achieved official status within the Roman empire as the cult of *Sol Invictus*, but these scattered dedications from the east do not seem to relate to official religious practices. An example of a dedication by a foreign soldier (apparently a veteran) to a local god, in the later second century, comes in an inscription from Baetocaece, a sanctuary in Phoenicia associated with the city of Arados.<sup>154</sup> The soldier, formerly a centurion of a legion (erased, probably *III Gallica*), records an offering of a pavement with steps and a bronze altar to θεῷ [μ]εγίστῳ ἁγίῳ ἐπηκόῳ Βαιτοχειχει [the greatest holy listening god of Baetocaece], the local deity. He lists his place of origin as Ulpia Oescus, in Moesia. Another dedication to the same god from the same sanctuary was that of an *eques*

151. IGLS VI, 2929. Millar (*Roman Near East*, 282) suggests that the dedicators saw these cults as Syrian. For a soldier's dedication to Atargatis, see AE 1930, 17.

152. Tac. *Hist.* 3.24. Millar (*Roman Near East*, 75, 522) doubts that sun worship was typical of Syria. See IGRR III, 1242, for a Syrian centurion's dedication to Sol.

153. D. Oates, "A Note on Three Latin Inscriptions from Hatra," 39–43, no. 80.

154. IGLS VII, 4034.

*singularis*, a guard cavalryman.<sup>155</sup> Otherwise, dedications from Syria tend to be of a more general character, such as the statues of Isis and Eirene (“Peace”—an appropriate dedication for a man trying to maintain public order) set up by centurions of *legio XVI Flavia Firma* at Phaena.<sup>156</sup>

With few exceptions, evidence from Syria and Mesopotamia, and overwhelmingly that from Dura-Europos, suggests that there was little common ground between soldiers and civilians regarding pagan religion. Specifically military cults, such as Mithras and Jupiter Dolichenus, perhaps reinforced the separate identity of soldiers. Otherwise, perhaps Palmyrene troops, their nominally Palmyrene successors, and the legionary who made a decision to Zeus Betylos at Dura took their native gods with them. However, this pattern may have been different in the legionary bases of northern Syria, where, given local recruitment, there may have been correspondence between local cults and the native cults of the legionaries.

#### Christianity, the Army, and the Defense of the Eastern Provinces

Christianity gained a temporary position of official recognition within the Roman empire in A.D. 260 and A.D. 272 in the reigns of Gallienus and Aurelian and more permanently under the terms of Licinius’ Edict of Nicomedia in A.D. 313.<sup>157</sup> There were doctrinal differences between Rome and eastern churches (Arianism) and subsequently between the orthodox church at Constantinople and the broad mass of eastern Christians (Monophysitism). After about a year as the official doctrine of the empire, Arianism was condemned at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, remaining important in the east from the A.D. 320s until its suppression by Theodosius in A.D. 381. In addition, some powerful individuals subscribed to Arianism, notably the emperors Constantius II and Valens. Violent persecution was rare, although soldiers occasionally were used by pro-Arian authorities in the reigns of Constantius II and Valens.<sup>158</sup> Monophysite church leaders were deposed after the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451, but the heresy remained important among lower-ranking clergy and at a popular level in Syria and Egypt, particularly in

155. Ibid., 4037. However, Millar (*Roman Near East*, 271–73) suggests that the name of the place (Baetocaece) was the only truly “oriental” element of this cult.

156. *IGRR* III, 1117, 1118.

157. See F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (1977), 571–84, on this process.

158. See Theodoret *HE* 2.14 (Alexandria, A.D. 356), 4.17 (Edessa, A.D. 371).

Syriac-speaking rural areas of Syria and Mesopotamia. Monophysites were treated with greater or lesser degrees of tolerance by the imperial authorities.

The effect of divisions within the eastern church should not be exaggerated. As Peter Brown has shown, the eastern empire was broadly homogeneous in terms of religious outlook, the differences between outsiders and eastern Romans being stronger than differences within the regions of the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>159</sup> In Syria and Mesopotamia the proximity of the Zoroastrian Persian king may have served to unify Christians when issues of defense were of importance. The religious dimension of the secular struggle between Rome and Persia, with Rome as the protector of the Christians within the Persian empire, is demonstrated by evidence that Constantine was preparing a war to liberate the Christians of Persia at the time of his death in A.D. 337 and by the clause guaranteeing freedom of worship for Christians within the Persian empire in Justinian's peace treaty of A.D. 561/2.<sup>160</sup>

Doubtless there were religious differences between Roman soldiers and the civilians they controlled. The army of the *Notitia Dignitatum* contained many pagan western barbarians, and the polyglot Byzantine army employed Chalcedonians from the Balkan provinces and Arian Goths—all to defend an area strongly Monophysite in character. But the army as a body does not seem to have displayed particular religious loyalties and mostly remained aloof from doctrinal controversies. Reviewing the period from Constantine to Valentinian, Nock noted that the change from a Christian emperor to the pagan Julian and back to the Christian Jovian did not seem to have a significant impact on the army and that the army's "relative indifference to religious changes" was remarkable.<sup>161</sup> This religious indifference and the internal homogeneity of the army made it possible to bring together men from different backgrounds, submerging separate identities in an institutional environment. This may have made it easier to employ soldiers as persecutors, but since persecution was rare, the status of soldiers in eastern Christianity was not particularly tainted by such activities. In fact, as Peter Brown has shown, soldiers were held in higher esteem in eastern Christianity than in western: while Sulpicius Severus, the western biographer of St. Martin, played

159. P. Brown, *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine* (1972), 54–55.

160. See T.D. Barnes, "Constantine and the Christians of Persia," *JRS* 75 (1985): 126–36; Menander Protector frag. 6.1, lines 398–407 Blockley (= *FHG* IV [ed. Müller], p. 213).

161. Nock, "The Roman Army and the Roman Religious Year," 226.

down the saint's military career, in Byzantine art saints frequently were depicted as soldiers.<sup>162</sup>

The rise of holy men and monastic establishments as alternative sources of authority and power was of greater significance than doctrinal divisions within the eastern empire.<sup>163</sup> These holy men and monastic establishments also played a part in the defense of Syria and Mesopotamia in the later empire. Charismatic Christian leaders assisted in the defense of fortress cities against the Persians. A good example is Bishop James of Nisibis, who acted as a spiritual focus for soldiers and civilians defending the city against Persian besiegers in A.D. 359. He called down a plague of insects on the attackers, so that "Constantius defeated the enemy not by the Roman army but by the god of the pious inhabitants of the Roman empire."<sup>164</sup>

From the fourth to the sixth century, fortified structures were built in the interior of Syria. Their remains are such a prominent feature of the landscape that Mousterde and Poidebard, who surveyed them from the air, named them the "*limes* of Chalcis," assuming that they formed a second line of defense, centered on Chalcis, against Persians who had penetrated the frontier. In fact, epigraphic evidence shows that most of these towers, fortified farms, and monasteries were built on private initiative in the early Byzantine period, probably against bandits and raiders. Religious authorities played an important part in their construction. For example, a lintel from a tower at Tell Hazné bears an inscription recording that Thomas, a *περιοδεύτης* (traveling cleric) built the tower in fulfillment of a vow.<sup>165</sup> Another lintel bears an inscription stating that it was erected for the safety and health of the brothers and their servants.<sup>166</sup> Fortified monasteries in Syria are known from literature, but identification of the remains of such structures often is uncertain.

### Family Formation and Veteran Settlement

Two other important social processes involve military personnel and their relationship to civilian communities, namely, intermarriage of soldiers

162. Brown, *Religion and Society*, 52–53.

163. See P. Brown, "Rise and Function of the Holy Man," 103–52; and "Town, Village, and Holy Man," 153–65.

164. Theodoret *HE* 2.30; see also C.S. Lightfoot, "Facts and Fiction: The Third Siege of Nisibis (A.D. 350)," *Historia* 37 (1988): 105–25.

165. *IGLS* IV, 1726.

166. *Ibid.*, 1768.

and civilians and veterans' transition from active military service to civilian life. Did soldiers have existing links of kinship with civilian communities because of local recruitment, and did soldiers recruited elsewhere form new kinship links by marrying local civilians? Veteran settlement might involve men recruited locally who retired to the communities of their birth and soldiers recruited elsewhere who chose to settle in the province of their service. How did military service change the status of individuals in their home communities, and to what degree were foreigners integrated into provincial communities?

### Families of Soldiers

Something has been said already about local recruitment in the legions of Syria and about similar developments among auxiliary units. In this context, the passage of Tacitus' *Histories* cited earlier,<sup>167</sup> recording the dismay of the army and the civilian population at Antioch at Mucianus' warnings that Vitellius planned to move the Syrian legions to Germany, makes perfect sense. Stationing legions in northern Syria from the republican period may have led to the development of family links with civilians, and locally recruited legionaries may have been stationed in cities close to existing kin.

Soldiers' marriages had the potential to serve as a vehicle for integration of outsiders into provincial communities and for integration of provincial civilians into the wider Roman world. Soldiers could not contract legal marriages until Septimius Severus granted them that privilege in A.D. 197,<sup>168</sup> but it is clear that they established informal relationships. Stationing units in and near towns and cities may have accelerated the formation of such associations in the east, in contrast to western provinces, where the development of civilian settlements around military bases provided soldiers with regular contact with local civilians and somewhere to house their illegal families. The law did not punish soldiers for contracting marriages but merely refused to recognize the marriages during the soldiers' period of service, depriving wives of improvement in status due to marriage, and depriving resulting children of their legitimacy. On completion of service, the soldier was granted legal right of marriage, *conubium*, and this included recognition of existing

167. Tac. *Hist.* 2.80.

168. See Herodian 3.8.5. See also B. Campbell, "The Marriage of Soldiers under the Empire," *JRS* 68 (1978): 153–66.

informal marriages, as is shown by the formula on the discharge diplomas of auxiliary troops.

*Imp(erator) Caesar . . . quorum nomina subscripta sunt, ipsis liberis posterisque eorum civitatem dedit et conubium cum uxoribus quas tunc habuissent cum est civitas iis data, aut, siqui caelibes essent, cum iis quas postea duxissent dumtaxat singuli singulas.*<sup>169</sup>

[Imp(erator) Caesar . . . grants citizenship to those men whose names are written above, and to their children and to their descendants, and grants the right to legally recognized marriage to wives whom they may have had at the time when citizenship was granted to them, or, if they were bachelors, to those whom they may have married, one wife for each man.]

This formula also grants citizenship to the soldiers' children and descendants, an important mechanism for integration and social mobility for families of auxiliary soldiers, mostly recruited from noncitizens in the first century A.D. But by the Antonine period, existing children did not obtain citizenship, and reference to them was omitted from the formula.

*Imp(erator) Caesar . . . quorum nomina subscripta sunt, civitatem Romanam qui eorum non haberent dedit, et conubium cum uxoribus quas tunc habuissent cum est civitas is data aut cum is quas postea duxissent dumtaxat singulis.*<sup>170</sup>

This change in the formula may relate to increasing recruitment of citizens as auxiliaries, and its impact on noncitizens' sons may have been mitigated by increasing hereditary recruitment from the camps. The formal implications of military service for the status of wives and children declined rapidly in importance from A.D. 197, when Severus granted soldiers the right of legal marriage, to A.D. 212, when the *Constitutio Antoniniana* granted citizenship to all free inhabitants of the empire. A papyrus letter from Dura, probably written late in this period, records that a soldier called Barsabbathas served at Bechufra (perhaps Kifrin)

169. This specific example is taken from *RMD* 1, no. 4 (A.D. 91), although the words used are formulaic on the known diplomas.

170. *RMD* 1, no. 55 (A.D. 161).

with all his family.<sup>171</sup> Perhaps his family moved to Bechufrayn with him and lived in the town there, or perhaps he was recruited locally and his family already lived there. Despite the legal changes, marriage remained a means by which soldiers and civilians could integrate, and civilians could still enhance their status by association with soldiers because of their social and legal privileges.

Epitaphs provide most evidence for family formation by soldiers. Saller and Shaw have assembled information on the relationship between the deceased and the commemorator(s)—whether spouses, children, parents, extended family members, or nonkin—on tombstones throughout the empire, on the assumption that the importance of the commemorative relationship equates to the importance of the social relationship recorded.<sup>172</sup> They record what they describe as specifically civilian and military patterns of commemoration. The civilian pattern mostly saw commemoration of an individual by members of a nuclear family, the military generally by nonkin (especially fellow soldiers) or by brothers who were serving soldiers. Saller and Shaw explain this military pattern as the result of soldiers' failure to form local family associations during their service. They argue that soldiers lived lives in the army as a self-contained society, chose fellow soldiers as heirs, and were commemorated by fellow soldiers. But this is not the only possible explanation. In a tight-knit society like a military unit, it may have been more appropriate for a soldier to be commemorated by fellow soldiers than by his family, even if the latter existed and was at hand. Saller and Shaw derived their most extreme example of the military pattern of commemoration from the *equites singulares Augusti*. These cavalrymen of the imperial guard were recruited on the German and Danubian frontiers and stationed in Rome except when they accompanied the emperor on campaign. They were deployed far from their homelands, they traveled a great deal, and the unit was elite and possibly insular, so it is not surprising that they did not form families. Epitaphs of soldiers from such provinces as Britain and the Germanies conform quite closely to the military pattern, but in such provinces as Africa, Numidia, Spain, and the Danube they conform more closely to the civilian pattern, with more dedications by family members.

171. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 183–85, no. 46. Perhaps he was a member of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, which outposted detachments to Bechufrayn.

172. R.P. Saller and B.D. Shaw, "Tombstones and Roman Family Relations in the Principate: Civilians, Soldiers, and Slaves," *JRS* 74 (1984): 124–56. This assumption is problematic, as the authors admit, but a reasonable working hypothesis.

Saller and Shaw suggest that these distinctions were the result of different recruiting practices, with local recruitment of troops from provinces with the civilian pattern, and with external recruitment of soldiers in provinces with “military” commemoration. Also, of course, soldiers from outside a province may have assimilated and formed families during their deployment there, but the basic conclusion that local recruitment was not true of all provinces in the second century is interesting and fits with the limited evidence for continued recruitment of outsiders into the *auxilia* of Syria and Mesopotamia.

Saller and Shaw do not analyze Syria, because few inscriptions from the province refer to the existence and composition of soldier’s families. Of the few published epitaphs, several include the common formula that the dedicatees provided their own tombstones, and several are so damaged that the names of the dedicators are illegible. Some follow Saller and Shaw’s military pattern. The tombstone of Septimius Mucapor, a (probably Thracian) soldier of *legio II Parthica*, found at Apamea, was set up by his heirs, two fellow soldiers.<sup>173</sup> This unit had a pattern of recruitment and service similar to the *equites singulares Augusti*: it recruited largely in the Balkans, was normally based in Italy, and was deployed to Apamea and the frontiers for specific campaigns. The majority of soldiers’ tombstones from Apamea published by Balty and van Rengen take this form. A very few inscriptions of senior (and hence probably atypical) soldiers mention family members. For example, an *aquilifer* (eagle-bearer) of *legio II Parthica* was commemorated by his wife, Flavia Magna; and a centurion of the same legion commemorated his wife, Antonia Kara.<sup>174</sup>

Some epitaphs of units based in the region for a long time take a “military” form. A Greek tombstone (from the region of Apamea) of a *beneficiarius* of *legio VI Ferrata*, based initially in Syria and then in Judaea, records that it was set up by his brother, a *primuspilus* of the same unit.<sup>175</sup> An inscription from Dura-Europos commemorating C. Iulius Rufinius, a centurion of *legio IIII Scythica*, was set up by a fellow centurion.<sup>176</sup> There is one clear commemoration of a serving or former soldier of a Syrian legion by a member of his nuclear family, a Greek epitaph of

173. IGLS IV, 1371.

174. AE 1993, 1572, 1597 (= Balty and van Rengen, *Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica*, 54 and pl. 28).

175. IGLS IV, 1804.

176. *Dura* 1, 49, no. 4, as edited in M.P. Speidel, “Colleagues as Heirs,” in *Roman Army Studies* (1992), 2:129–30.

M. Licinius Proclus, a centurion (again not a common soldier) of *legio III Gallica*, dedicated by his wife, Iulia Severa, and found at Cyrrhus.<sup>177</sup> Aelius Verecundinus, a Dacian centurion of *legio IIII Scythica*, was commemorated at Apamea by his freedman Aelius Rufinus, a member of his *familia* in Roman terms, even if not a member of his nuclear family.<sup>178</sup> The freeing of slaves by soldiers might have had some long-term impact on the legal status and culture of the provincial population.

A few inscriptions besides soldiers' epitaphs shed light on families. A Latin inscription from Raphanaea commemorates Cornelia, the wife of C. Iulius Serenus, a military tribune of *legio VI Ferrata*.<sup>179</sup> A Latin funerary inscription from Seleucia Pieria shows a complex family structure.<sup>180</sup> The dead woman commemorated is Flavia Albina, daughter of a *primuspilus*, Flavius Albinus. The dedication was set up by her daughter, Vettia Albina, which implies that her father, Flavia Albina's husband, was Vettius. However, the codedicator was Maximus Valens, a trierarch described as *maritus Albinae matris*, leading one to suppose that the dedicatee had remarried. Neither of these inscriptions shed much light on integration or "romanization" by marriage. Flavia Albina was a soldier's daughter and married a naval officer, a reflection on the social exclusiveness of the Roman military. Cornelia may have traveled to Syria with her husband from their original home, as officers were allowed to marry and have their wives travel with them even before the Severan reform.<sup>181</sup>

Finally, there is the dedication to the god of Baetocaece by T. Aurelius Decimus, which has already been mentioned because of its religious significance.<sup>182</sup> He made the dedication with his children, T. Aurelius Decimus, Decimia Marciana, and T. Decimius Marcianus. The editors suggest that the last two were adopted, as they have *gentilicia* derived from his cognomen. The dedication predates Severus' grant of *conubium* to soldiers, and the presence of at least one child with his father's name implies a legitimate marriage, not allowed for a serving centurion. Thus it is likely that he was a veteran who married after discharge. It appears he came from Moesia to serve in Syria (probably in *legio III Gallica*; the

177. IGRR III, 1004.

178. AE 1993, 1577 (= Balty and van Rengen, *Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica*, 29 and pl. 7).

179. IGLS IV, 1400.

180. IGLS III.2, 1156.

181. This is indicated by Suetonius *Augustus* 24 (legates) and CIL VIII, 2756 (a tribune's wife). Cf. Parker, *The Roman Legions*, 238.

182. IGLS VII, 4034.

name is erased), where he retired and married an unnamed woman, perhaps Syrian. If the adopted children were his wife's by an earlier marriage, her former husband probably was Marcianus, and with a Latin name, he may have been another ex-soldier. This inscription may show intermarriage of a foreign soldier and a local woman, as well as marriage of a soldier to another soldier's widow—again, institutional endogamy within the army.

A few documents from the middle Euphrates relate to the families of soldiers in the third century. One of the Euphrates papyri mentions Aurelius Va[- -], a *primipilus* of *legio I Parthica*, and his wife, Aurelia Victorina, at Nisibis in A.D. 252.<sup>183</sup> They appear to be recent citizens on the basis of the *Aurelius* nomina, and the name *Victorina* appears Latin, but their ethnic background is unclear. A Greek papyrus marriage contract of a soldier of *cohors XII Palaestinorum*, Aurelius Alexander, indicates he married a widow, Aurelia Marcellina, daughter of Marcellinus, resident at nearby Qatna.<sup>184</sup> She had a brother called Agrippinus. The Latin names of the woman and her family suggest a western origin and perhaps an existing association with the army. A veteran wrote for the illiterate bride, and soldiers acted as witnesses. The editors suggest that her dead husband was a soldier. Again, all this tends to support the argument that the army functioned as a relatively closed and introverted society. Even if she was local in some real cultural sense, it is unlikely she was “romanized” by her husband, whose nomen, *Aurelius*, indicates recent citizenship under the *Constitutio Antoniana*, and whose cognomen, *Alexander*, is not specific as to origin.

The single clear example of intermarriage between a Roman soldier and local woman at Dura is a Greek papyrus divorce document dated to A.D. 254.<sup>185</sup> The soldier is Iulius Antiochus, a soldier of *legio IIII Scythica*, whose name suggests that he may have come from a family of Greco-Macedonian origin (perhaps from a north Syrian city) that had held Roman citizenship for some time. The wife he divorced was Aurelia Ammima, whose name suggests recent citizenship and is probably of Syrian or Mesopotamian origin. She is described as Δ]ο]υ[ρ]η[ν] [Durene], meaning that she was born or at least resident at Dura. Thus evidence from the Principate provides us with one clear example of intermarriage by a soldier with a local woman, with some possibility of cultural interchange.

183. Feissel and Gasco, “Documents” (1989), 559, no. 9.

184. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 153–59, no. 30.

185. *Ibid.*, 166–69, no. 32.

Finally an inscription from Aere in southern Syria is an epitaph of a veteran of *legio III Gallica* and his wife (σύνβιος) Οὐλπία Φασειέλη. This name does not appear to be Greek.<sup>186</sup> Other pieces of evidence for family formation suggest that the wife had an existing family connection with the army. Finally, there are tombstones set up by fellow soldiers, perhaps indicating the absence of family formation, and tombstones paid for by the deceased themselves, which tell us little.

There is a near-complete absence of epigraphic evidence from the later empire, and conclusions regarding soldiers' families inevitably are speculative. If frontier troops were local and sedentary in deployment, probably they developed ties of kinship with local communities. Certainly it would have been easy for soldiers to live with or close to their families in the fortress cities of the later empire. However, the privileged social and economic position of soldiers at this time and the increasingly hereditary nature of military service made the development of military families, distinct from civilians, more likely. Also, many troops, such as *limitanei* of western barbarian origin and *comitatenses*, came from outside Syria and Mesopotamia. The evidence from the Principate, such as that for *legio II Parthica*, suggests that soldiers of units recently arrived or temporarily stationed in Syria did not form families with locals. Some options for the late imperial soldier are shown by the Syriac story of Euphemia and the Goth.<sup>187</sup> This is set in Edessa in A.D. 396 and tells how a Gothic soldier (Syriac writers often used Goth as a vague term for a soldier, particularly a westerner) was billeted in a house with a widow and her daughter, Euphemia. He persuaded the widow to let him marry Euphemia on the condition that he settled near her home. However, when peace came, he returned home, taking his new wife with him, contrary to the agreement. When they reached his home (it is not stated where), Euphemia discovered he had a wife there already. Thus a soldier might leave his wife in his homeland while he was on campaign or might marry a civilian in his place of service and settle there or take his wife back to his homeland.

Another possibility is that troops from outside Syria and Mesopotamia brought families with them when they deployed there. Ammianus records that in A.D. 360 Constantius II sent to Gaul for troops to be sent east to fight against the Persians.<sup>188</sup> The men of the *Petulantes* complained to Julian that if they left their families behind, they would be defenseless

186. *IGRR III*, 1183. Φασαήλις was the name of a town in Judaea.

187. *Euphemia and the Goth*, ed. and trans. F.C. Burkitt (1913).

188. Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.1–11.

against enslavement by the Allemani. Julian agreed to let the families go with them, using the imperial transport service. Eventually, when Julian was Augustus, the *Petulantes* formed part of the army gathered at Antioch for his Persian war. The Theodosian Code makes provision for the transport of soldiers' families, apparently by the imperial transport service, limiting eligible individuals to wives, children, and slaves purchased with the military *peculium*.<sup>189</sup> This suggests that Ammianus' account is not exceptional. It is possible that soldiers' families could even draw military rations. Some sections of the Theodosian Code discuss commutation of the rations assigned to *familiae*, perhaps soldiers' dependents.<sup>190</sup> On the fall of the German general Stilicho in A.D. 408, the families of his barbarian troops were massacred in cities throughout the western empire.<sup>191</sup> Evidence that soldiers' families traveled with them and the fact that those families were readily identifiable to their killers suggest they were members of the same ethnic group as the troops rather than locals who had intermarried. Perhaps they and their husbands and fathers would have integrated eventually, but at this time it is clear that they formed a distinctive group, set aside from the civilian population by ethnicity and military connections, even though they were settled in urban centers with those civilians.

### Veterans

Veterans are a clear target for investigation in any study of the relationship of civilian and military, as, in some sense, they combined characteristics of both. Veteran settlement was a mechanism for integration, as soldiers of foreign origin settled and assimilated to the local population. Soldiers recruited locally were changed by their military service and were differentiated from the civilian population in social, legal, and economic status and perhaps in other respects. Thus it is of particular interest to examine their position in civilian communities after their retirement.

As discussed in chapter 1, the wholesale settlement of veterans in specific communities with the status of *coloniae* took place only in two places

189. *C.Th.* 7.1.3 (A.D. 349)

190. *Ibid.*, 7.4.28 (A.D. 406), 31 (A.D. 409). Pharr, the translator of the Theodosian Code suggests that these *familiae* were groups of newly recruited soldiers, but references to imperial transport in the code clearly use *familia* for soldiers' dependents. Libanius (*Or.* 2.39) indicates that soldiers' families around Antioch in A.D. 380/1 did not get rations.

191. See Zosimus 5.35.

in Syria, namely, Berytus and its territory (including Heliopolis), probably in 15/14 B.C., and Ptolemais/Acco, in the reign of Claudius. Berytus became “romanized” in a fairly distinctive manner and showed more evidence of the use of Latin and of worship of Italian deities than other communities in the region, and it developed as a renowned center of Latin literary culture and Roman law. However, it remained a unique enclave within a region that remained steadfastly un-Roman. For the most part, romanization per se, in the classic western form, is not relevant in Syria and Mesopotamia outside Berytus-Heliopolis. The cultural change that accompanied political expansion was really a version of “hellenization,” the spread of Greek-style urbanization and urban institutions into previously marginal areas, such as southern Syria and Arabia. In the later empire, there was a loosening of local Greek civic traditions all over the eastern Mediterranean and a higher level of political participation in the government of the empire as a whole by easterners, which might be viewed as a form of “romanization.”

As discussion of ethnicity and recruitment showed, a substantial proportion of troops in Syria and Mesopotamia in all periods were foreign. As diplomas of the first and early second centuries showed, some troops returned to their home provinces after their service was completed.<sup>192</sup> However, the absence of diplomas found in Syria and Mesopotamia does not mean that no foreign troops remained there on retirement. A clear example is T. Aurelius Decimus, the Moesian ex-centurion who made the dedication to the god of Baetocaece in A.D. 185/6.<sup>193</sup> He may have settled in nearby Arados or elsewhere in southern Syria. Tchalenko refers to an inscription of A.D. 310 of Valerius Romullus, a Pannonian veteran, from the limestone massif.<sup>194</sup> A fragmentary inscription from Beroea apparently refers to a veteran of *ala Thracum veteranorum*, normally based on the Danube frontier.<sup>195</sup> He may have come to Syria as part of an expeditionary force, probably in the first half of the third century, and remained

192. The diplomas give some indication of auxiliary veterans returning to their home provinces, although Russell, in “A Roman Military Diploma from Eastern Pamphylia,” shows a Syrian recruited by an auxiliary unit in Syria who moved with the unit to Lycia-Pamphylia and, apparently, retired there. The evidence for legionary veterans is summarized by Mann in *Legionary Recruitment*, 150–51, table 26, showing that the majority of veterans of Syrian legions known from first- and second-century inscriptions settled outside their areas of service.

193. *IGLS* VII, 4034.

194. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 1:140.

195. *IGLS* 1, 181.

there on retirement. Julius Demetrius, a veteran of *cohors III Augusta Thracum*, purchased a vineyard in the lower Khabur valley in A.D. 227.<sup>196</sup> He may have been Syrian rather than Thracian (although the name *Demetrius* was common among Macedonians and Thracians), but it is unlikely that he was from the area to which he retired. Several other papyri provide evidence of veteran settlement in the lower Khabur valley and the vicinity of Dura-Europos, although some of these men may have been of local origin.<sup>197</sup>

As described in chapter 1, there is evidence that veterans were granted land in frontier areas by the reign of Severus Alexander, perhaps on the condition that their sons served, and this may have been the case in marginal parts of eastern and southern Syria. Several fourth-century laws recorded in the Theodosian Code provide for tax-free occupation of abandoned land by veterans.<sup>198</sup> These probably included agriculturally marginal land and areas where agriculture and occupation had been disrupted by warfare, and both were common in Syria and Mesopotamia. The economic significance of this is discussed in chapters 5 and 6, but relevant to the current discussion is the question of whether such settlement had significant social and cultural impact on frontier areas. The first problem is one of numbers. Were there enough veterans to avoid being lost in the mainstream civilian culture?<sup>199</sup> We have virtually no evidence regarding the number of veterans settled in these zones or the size of the civilian population. A second issue is that by the third century, soldiers were no more “Roman” ethnically and perhaps culturally than the local population, as they were for the most part from the fringes of the empire or from outside of it.<sup>200</sup> Aside from, perhaps, a rudimentary knowledge of Latin, their only specifically “Roman” quality was their privileged status, the result of their relationship to central authority. This may have bound them more closely to that authority than to other civilians and may have been divisive in their relationship with the indigenous population, as, perhaps, was their

196. See *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 134–41, no. 26.

197. *Ibid.*, 153–59, no. 30 (a veteran writes a marriage contract for an illiterate bride); *ibid.*, 160–66, no. 31 (a veteran witnesses a civilian divorce); Feissel and Gascou, “Documents” (1989), 558, no. 5 (a veteran serves as a witness in a dispute). The name of the veteran in the last was Aramaic (Barsemaias) so he probably was recruited locally.

198. *C.Th.* 7.20.3.pr. (A.D. 320), 7.20.8.1 (A.D. 364), 7.20.11 (A.D. 368, 370).

199. Alston, in *Soldiers and Society in Roman Egypt*, 48–52, provides calculations for veterans in Egypt that suggest that they are not sufficiently numerous to have a major impact on that province as a whole.

200. Cf. *ibid.*, 142: “veterans of Karanis were not at the forefront of Romanisation.”

wealth. This leads to the third issue, the nature of frontier veteran society—whether it was integrated with civilians or exclusive of them. The evidence is meager but suggests retention of strong ties between some veterans and the army. The purchase of land by the veteran of *cohors III Augusta Thracum* was, at least in theory, a civilian matter, but the papyrus was drawn up in the winter quarters of the veteran's old unit and witnessed by serving soldiers. This suggests that the lifestyles of some ex-soldiers may have emphasized continued contact with the army. The increasingly permanent stationing of units in the later empire (particularly when focused on a fortress city and its territory), tendencies to local recruiting, and recruitment from the sons of veterans may have strengthened this link and, along with the veterans' status and privileges, may have served to set them apart from the civilian population.<sup>201</sup>

In contrast, veterans in villages of southern Syria and northern Arabia seem to have been heavily involved in the lives of the communities in which they settled.<sup>202</sup> Undoubtedly many of them came from that area, the source of many auxiliary and legionary recruits by the later second century. Others may have been foreign settlers who served in southern Syria or Arabia. One papyrus from Dura suggests a higher level of integration of a veteran with civilian affairs, as a veteran called Julius Germanus witnessed a divorce between individuals who seem to have been civilians, all with Aramaic names, in the village of Ossa, near the junction of the Khabur and the Euphrates.<sup>203</sup>

Other veterans, their legal, economic, and social status enhanced by their service, settled away from the frontiers, often in their home communities. During the Principate, Roman citizenship was one benefit of military service, as was legal advantage and enhanced prestige. Another benefit was the cash discharge bonus. The Theodosian Code gives an indication of additional privileges in the later empire. For example, a rescript of Constantine granted freedom from municipal liturgies and taxes, and these provisions were repeated in A.D. 366, with an added reference to the freedom of veterans to engage in business—buy and sell—free from customs dues.<sup>204</sup>

201. However, Alston's observation (*ibid.*, 140–41) that the "Romanness" of veterans is overstated in legal documents because of their need for other citizen witnesses is salutary.

202. Cf. H.I. Macadam, "Epigraphy and Village Life in Southern Syria," 113f. Their generally integrated situation seems more akin to that of the Egyptian veterans described by Alston, but perhaps with slightly higher status and relative wealth.

203. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 160–66, no. 31, A.D. 204.

204. *C.Th.* 7.20.1 (A.D. 318, 324, 326); 7.20.9 (A.D. 366): *iussimus . . . licere emere vendere negotiari*.

Evidence for the roles and status of veterans in eastern urban communities is limited, but two inscriptions from Arados in Phoenicia, probably of the late first or early second century, provide some indication. The first is a statue base inscribed in Greek with an honorific formula referring to a statue of M. Septimius Magnus, centurion of *legio IIII Scythica*, set up by the βουλή and δῆμος (council and assembly) of Arados to “their fellow citizen, on account of his goodwill.”<sup>205</sup> The second is a Latin and Greek funerary dedication to the same individual set up by his brother, this time describing him as centurion of *legio III Gallica* (partly erased) twice, of *III Scythica* twice, of *XX Valeria Victrix* twice, and of *I Minerva* and of *X Fretensis* twice.<sup>206</sup> It appears that M. Septimius Magnus was a citizen of Arados who had a moderately distinguished military career (there is no evidence that he reached the upper ranks of the centurionate) in Syria and elsewhere and retired to his home city, where he achieved some status as a civic benefactor. Since the curial classes of hellenized cities rarely served in the imperial government or army at this time, we might assume that he was not from the highest social orders in the city when he enrolled and that he received enhanced status as the result of his service.<sup>207</sup>

Otherwise, there are only a few scattered references to veterans from communities to which they retired. Some are from cities or their territories, including inscriptions from near Beroea naming one [M]alchus from Tyre, Flavius Ulpianus from Damascus, and T. Flavius Iulianus, of *legio VIII Augusta* (mainly based in Germany).<sup>208</sup> Two come from villages in southern Syria, one naming Ulpus Alexander, a veteran of *legio III Gallica*, and the other Valerius Maximus, a veteran of *VI Ferrata*.<sup>209</sup> These may have been outsiders who settled in what was, in some respects, a frontier zone, but a significant number of legionaries seem to

205. *IGLS* VII, 4015 (= *IGRR* III, 1017).

206. *IGLS* VII, 4016 (= *IGRR* III, 1016; *CIL* III, 186).

207. Objections are (1) that Arados was not a traditional Hellenistic city and hence that imperial service may have been more prestigious there than in the north Syrian tetrapolis and (2) that Septimius' tribe, *Fabia*, is unusual for new citizens in the east, most of whom belonged to *Quirina*. The editor suggests that Septimius' family obtained citizenship by the mid-first century by association with either colonists of Berytus or an early emperor of that tribe. Either possibility suggests that his status on enrollment was atypical for an easterner.

208. *IGRR* III, 1104, 1091, 1007 (= *CIL* III, 191). Perhaps the individual in the last of these (an elaborate tomb fragment) was either a Syrian who served elsewhere and retired to his place of birth (see Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 1:190) or was not Syrian but came east with a vexillation and retired there.

209. *IGRR* III, 1138, 1110.

have originated in villages of southern Syria and northern Arabia from the second century onwards, so it is more likely that they had retired to their home communities. These inscriptions tell us little about the status of the individuals concerned, but they at least indicate that these men or their commemorators thought it worthwhile to advertise that they were veterans.

The lack of epigraphic evidence from the later empire once more creates gaps in our knowledge. Privileges of veterans were even greater in the later empire than in the Principate, and Libanius' speeches attest the desirability of exemptions from curial duties, which veterans and serving soldiers obtained. He records that the emperor Julian, whom he credits with strengthening the city council of Antioch, returned three army officers from military service to that body to perform municipal duties.<sup>210</sup> Thus soldiers, and hence veterans, of the later empire perhaps came from more elevated backgrounds than those typical of soldiers of the Principate. In the later empire, imperial service of any kind was desirable (even to members of the ruling classes of Greek cities, who previously had remained aloof from Roman government) because of the privileges that came with it. The privileges of soldiers and veterans applied even to a nominal form of military service, such as in the *protectores domestici*, imperial guards largely recruited from high-status individuals.<sup>211</sup> Similar privileges were awarded to members of the imperial civil service, however. Libanius and the Theodosian Code provide numerous references to curials evading their duties by joining the office staffs of civilian officials and to the sons of veterans evading their military obligations in the same way. These imply that military service was not the preferred manner of obtaining privileged status. Nevertheless, veteran status does seem to have conferred some prestige on individuals in late Roman Antioch. For example, Libanius records that just before the "Riot of the Statues" in Antioch in A.D. 387, notables from the city came before the governor requesting a reduction of the oppressive tax burden that eventually led to the riot. The notables included ex-governors, men who had been active in civic politics, those who made a living in the law courts, and those who had done military service, thus placing ex-soldiers in fairly distinguished company.<sup>212</sup>

210. Libanius *Or.* 49.19.

211. See *LRE* vol. 2: 636–39.

212. Libanius *Or.* 19.26.

## Conclusions

It is clear that the Roman army in Syria and Mesopotamia was not just a force to defend the region against foreign enemies. Its functions included duties at the lowest level of Roman provincial administration, often in potentially unpopular and even violent situations, such as policing and tax collection. Officers down to the rank of centurion could wield considerable independent authority, perhaps intervening in local civilian government and certainly acting as judges, whether legally or otherwise. This intervention seems to have been most common in areas where civilian administration (both Roman and civic) were weakest and less so in the civilian core of the province, the cities of northern Syria, despite the considerable concentration of troops there. The official positions of soldiers allowed them to make certain unpopular but legal demands on civilians, for lodging, food, and transport. Their legal privilege, official status, and potential for violence meant that officially sanctioned impositions could be exceeded without protection for civilians, and the behavior of the troops could descend to unofficial extortion and brutality.

Chapter 4 has focused on whether the official role of the army as an enforcer of the policies of the central government was moderated to some degree by unofficial ethnic, social, and cultural relationships between soldiers and the civilians they controlled. The answer to this is not simple. It is clear that many soldiers serving in the region were recruited there at all times, starting with early legionary recruitment from cities of northern Syria and Phoenicia. Given this and the importance of north Syrian legionary bases in the Principate, it is probable that ties did exist between civilians and soldiers in that area, ties of ethnic origin, language (Greek), kinship, and perhaps religion. From the second century, there was increased local recruitment of troops to serve in the region. The Syrian auxiliaries stationed at Dura-Europos were less alien to the civilian population than were the Thracians typical of first-century auxiliary units in Syria. Local recruitment may have been common in the later empire for frontier and garrison troops. However, it seems unlikely that the cultural associations of soldiers and civilians were strong enough to mask the special position of the soldiers vis à vis the central power. Even when such associations existed, the army had a strong corporate identity and was set apart from civilians by its privileges.

Furthermore, a significant proportion of the soldiers in Syria and

Mesopotamia came from outside at all periods. Auxiliaries from other areas, particularly Thrace, continued to serve in Syria into the second century and possibly into the third. In the first to third centuries, legionary vexillations from units recruited and based elsewhere were deployed for wars against the Parthians and Sassanians. Evidence from Apamea suggests that large numbers of Balkan soldiers of *legio II Parthica* were based near that city for considerable periods of time. In the later empire, we find Aurelian's Moorish and Illyrian troops and, in the fourth century, western barbarians. These regular intrusions of aliens, often in large concentrations and making burdensome demands on local resources, meant that the army never could blend into provincial life. This emphasized the "otherness" of the army, and the specialized examination of evidence for religion, family formation, and veterans shows the army's distinct, separate identity just as much as it does any significant integration of soldier and civilian. It seems unlikely that the things that soldiers and civilians had in common were strong enough to weaken a perception of the army as the government's agency of control.

All of this tends to emphasize the separateness of the army from the civilian population.<sup>213</sup> Fergus Millar has stressed the integration of the Roman army into the civilian population at Dura-Europos.<sup>214</sup> This is a reasonable point of view when one examines the spatial relationship between the two groups as well as their ethnic origins. However, a detailed examination of the evidence for cultural and social relationships suggests that the institutional identity of the army supplanted many of the ethnic characteristics of the individuals who composed it.

The importance of institutional separation is particularly surprising given the considerable evidence for the physical proximity of soldiers and civilians in Syria and Mesopotamia demonstrated in part 1. Given only

213. This emphasis on separation contrasts with the conclusions of Richard Alston, (*Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt*, 160) drawn from Egyptian evidence. He places strong emphasis on the integration of soldiers, veterans, and civilians there. The reasons for our different conclusions may relate to differential survival of evidence. For example, he has much better documentation for veterans but lacks the recurring complaints regarding billeting that survive from Syria and Mesopotamia and the equivalent of the vast body of evidence for the army in an urban environment from Dura. There may also be regional distinctions. For example, nonlocal troops were brought to Syria more regularly and in greater numbers than to Egypt. Moreover, the dispersed, village-based settlement of military colonists in Ptolemaic Egypt may have promoted a tradition of greater integration there than in Seleucid Syria, with its apparent "enclave mentality" and concentrated urban colonial settlements.

214. Millar, *Roman Near East*, 130–31, 133.

evidence (archaeological and epigraphic) of physical proximity, we might draw mistaken conclusions about social and cultural proximity. The quality of the documentary evidence from a few sites, particularly Dura-Europos, shows that an institution with a strongly introspective social character and distinctive advantages of status and power can maintain a separate identity from a population even when the two coexist physically. Indeed, a high degree of physical intermingling may even serve to emphasize the importance of social and cultural separation as a means of preserving identity. Conversely, the evidence from Dura (a frontier community, Roman for less than a century) may distort the picture somewhat. The situation in northern Syria may have involved greater integration.



PART 3

**The Roman Army and the Regional  
Economy of Syria and Mesopotamia**



## CHAPTER 5

# The Regional Economy of Syria and Mesopotamia in the Principate

After considering political, administrative, social, and cultural aspects of the Roman army in Syria and Mesopotamia, it remains to consider its position in the regional economy. This analysis employs a model of the Roman economy proposed by Keith Hopkins.<sup>1</sup> The choice of this model does not imply that it is a “correct” depiction of the actual operation of the Roman economy. As a depiction of reality, it oversimplifies and has many flaws, some of them admitted by Hopkins himself, some demonstrated by others,<sup>2</sup> and some made apparent in this study. The model was chosen because it deals with articulation of important elements of the economy, such as taxation, army pay, coinage and monetization, agricultural and artisan production, and interregional trade. It provides a useful organizational tool for analysis and comparison and for structuring diverse evidence, the principal function of a model in archaeological and historical study. Some issues not considered explicitly in Hopkins’ model, such as the importance of the army in direct economic exploitation of the provinces (e.g., mining and forestry) and in construction of “infrastructure” (roads, ports, etc.), form the subject matter of chapter 7.

The most important feature of Hopkins’ model articulating various components of the Roman imperial economy is a notional division of the empire into three elements: an outer ring of frontier provinces containing armies consuming tax money as pay; an inner ring of wealthy tax-exporting provinces (among which Hopkins includes Syria); and the center, Rome itself, also a consumer, with its urban population and imperial court. Hopkins proposed that the need for the “inner ring” to pay cash in taxes to the center and the “outer ring” stimulated production in tax-

1. Hopkins, “Taxes and Trade.”

2. See, e.g., Duncan-Jones, “Trade, Taxes, and Money,” in *Structure and Scale*, 30–47.

exporting areas and trade between those areas and others needing to “buy back” cash to pay further taxes.

Syria and Mesopotamia reveal an anomaly in this model. While the region was wealthy—with the potential to be a “tax exporter,” in Hopkins’ terms—it was also a frontier zone with a large garrison in the region.<sup>3</sup> In some senses, it belonged to both the “inner ring” and the “outer ring.” This enables us to examine elements of Hopkins’ model in a microcosm. These elements and the related questions are as follows.

1. Taxation. What do we know about the nature of taxation in Roman Syria and Mesopotamia (e.g., cash or kind) and the level exacted? Ultimately, part of the tax ended up as army pay, a fact that leads to the next issue.
2. Acquisition and disposal of army pay. Did it come in cash or kind? How did the production, movement, and use of coinage in the region relate to army needs? Among the evidence for economic transactions between the army or individual soldiers and the civilian population, is there evidence that might imply “recycling” of cash from soldiers to civilian taxpayers?
3. Civilians’ acquisition of the coinage or commodities required to pay taxes? Is there any evidence of qualitative or quantitative changes in production and trade relating to the tax burden?

This analysis is split into two periods, before and after the mid-third century A.D. The later third century and Diocletian’s reign saw profound changes in the Roman army, taxation, and coinage. Many of these changes were prefigured in the reigns of earlier emperors, but by the reign of Diocletian all were in place, and the Roman empire was very different from that of the second century A.D. This division is of broad utility, and finer chronological differences tend to be obscured by the vagaries of the evidence from the region.

### Taxation in Syria and Mesopotamia in the Principate

The first subject considered is taxation by the central government, leaving aside the issue of municipal taxation, a source of revenue for provincial

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3. Hopkins, “Taxes and Trade,” 101. Duncan-Jones (*Structure and Scale*, 43) points out the paradox.

communities rather than for the imperial government. The evidence specifically regarding Syria and Mesopotamia is fairly limited and is widely scattered through the period, but in essence the tax system can be broken down into three components: regular direct taxes levied by the state on provincial communities, principally *tributum capitis* (poll tax) and *tributum soli* (land tax); regular indirect taxes, principally customs and harbor dues, known as *portoria*; and irregular impositions, mentioned in chapter 3. Previously it was assumed that direct provincial taxation and the forms of its payment were systematized during the Principate, probably under Augustus.<sup>4</sup> However, recent studies suggest that provincial and regional diversity in taxation remained normal and that the urge to impose a homogeneous structure is misleading.<sup>5</sup>

The earliest evidence for Roman Syria is that of Appian, who records that Syria and Cilicia paid a tax of “one-hundredth of their assessment.”<sup>6</sup> Presumably this means that the state exacted an annual 1 percent of the assessed capital value of land and probably of other assets too. It is unclear when this tax was in force. Appian mentions it in the context of Pompey’s activities in Syria and Judaea and the application of a high rate of poll tax on the Jews because of resistance to Pompey, Vespasian, and Hadrian. He uses the present tense for the application of that tax and the land tax in Syria, so it seems he was referring to contemporary (second-century A.D.) practices. Ulpian provides evidence for later taxation in Syria, in the early third century. In a discussion of census information, he notes that the poll tax there was levied on men aged fourteen to sixty-five and women aged twelve to sixty-five.<sup>7</sup> It is possible that both land and poll taxes were in place at the same time.<sup>8</sup>

A census is necessary to assess property values for a land tax and to record the population for a poll tax. At least one is known, covering Syria

4. See, e.g., A.H.M. Jones, “Taxation in Antiquity,” in *The Roman Economy: Studies in Ancient Economic and Administrative History*, ed. P. Brunt (1974), 164.

5. Such studies include L. Neesen’s *Untersuchungen zu den direkten Staatsabgaben der römischen Kaiserzeit* (1980); Brunt’s review of that volume in “The Revenues of Rome,” in *Roman Imperial Themes* (1990), 324–46; and “Taxation in Money and Taxation in Kind,” chap. 12 of Duncan-Jones’ *Structure and Scale* (187–98).

6. Appian *Bell. Syr.* 50: ἔστι δὲ καὶ Σύροις καὶ Κίλικιν ἐτήσιος, ἑκατοστὴ τοῦ τιμήματος ἑκάστω [There is an annual [tax] on the Syrians and Cilicians of 1 percent of the assessment on each [man?]].

7. *Digest* 50.15.3 (Ulpian *De censibus* 2).

8. *Ibid.*, 50.15.8.7 (Paul *De censibus* 2) implies that poll and land taxes were imposed simultaneously on the same community.

and Judaea in A.D. 6, during the governorship of Quirinius.<sup>9</sup> The “Syro-Roman Law Book” includes a late imperial discussion of the categorization of agricultural land according to use (vines, olives, grain, pasture) and topographic situation.<sup>10</sup> This is most relevant to post-Diocletianic tax assessment but provides some evidence for land assessment during the Principate.

The most practical way to collect a poll tax is in cash. It is probable, but not certain, that the property tax was exacted in cash rather than kind. Seleucid Syria was monetized before the Roman arrival, although the Seleucids took tax in kind elsewhere.<sup>11</sup> Similarly the Romans collected taxes in kind in some provinces that were monetized in the Hellenistic period.<sup>12</sup> Duncan-Jones assumes that tax was paid in cash at the time of the census of Quirinius. Another reason for supposing that Quirinius collected tax in cash is his personal involvement in reorganization of coinage at Antioch, where some issues were struck in his name.<sup>13</sup> Less significant direct taxes were levied on Roman citizens throughout the empire, including Syria. They included the *vicesima hereditatis*, a tax on inheritances instituted by Augustus to pay discharge bonuses to veterans, and the *vicesima libertatis*, a tax on slave manumission.<sup>14</sup>

The second major group of taxes, *portoria*, or customs dues, also is attested in the region.<sup>15</sup> It seems that imperial authorities levied dues on goods that crossed into the empire from the east, and evidence is provided by a 25 percent tax on incoming goods levied by an official supported by a centurion and soldiers at the Arabian Red Sea port of Leuke Kome in the

9. Josephus *AJ* 17.355, 18.2f. An inscription (*CIL* III, 6687) records the name of the individual who took the census at Apamea: Q. *Aemilius Secundus iussu Quirini censum egi Apamena civitatis*. On the census of Quirinius in general, see Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 1:399–427.

10. The law book is translated from Syriac into Latin in *FIRA*<sup>2</sup> II, 751–98. The land assessment is detailed there in chap. 122, on pp. 796–97.

11. See *CIG* 2673, 2675–77 (a tithe on crops at Tralles in Caria).

12. An example is Asia in the first century B.C.: see Appian *Bell. Cir.* 5.4.17; Cicero *Pro Lege Manilia* 15. Millar (*Roman Near East*, 49, 97–98) suggests that the collection of taxes in cash and kind attested in Arabia in A.D. 127 in the Babatha archive implies a similar practice in Syria. Certainly the tax system *may* have been similar there, but given the apparent regional diversity in those mechanisms, the Babatha document does not *prove* the nature of taxation in Syria.

13. See C.J. Howgego, “Coinage and Military Finance: The Imperial Bronze Coinage of the Augustan East,” *Numismatic Chronicle* 142 (1982): 7–8.

14. See Cassius Dio 31.4, 55.25.5. See also P. Brunt, “Publicans in the Principate,” in *Roman Imperial Themes* (1990): 354–432 *passim*, especially 402–6.

15. The standard work on the subject is S.J. de Laet, *Portorium* (1949).

*Periplus Maris Erythraei*.<sup>16</sup> Overland routes between the Mediterranean and Arabian Gulf crossed the eastern Roman frontier at several places.<sup>17</sup> These routes ran either along the Euphrates valley via Dura-Europos into northern Syria or across the desert south of the Euphrates to Palmyra, or they followed the Tigris north and west into northern Mesopotamia, crossing the Euphrates at Zeugma. The best-known customs tariff from the region, the tax law of Palmyra, is a municipal tariff, established by municipal magistrates.<sup>18</sup> De Laet has set forth evidence for an imperial customs tariff in addition to the municipal one at Palmyra.<sup>19</sup> Two inscriptions were found in the agora of Palmyra, the first a dedication of A.D. 161 from an Arabian Gulf caravan leader to a decurion of Antioch who is described as τεταρτώνης.<sup>20</sup> De Laet interprets this as a farmer of a tax of 25 percent and concludes (because the same rate was exacted at Leuke Kome) that the tax at Palmyra was an imperial tax imposed on goods imported into the empire. The non-Palmyrene (Antiochene) origin of the man honored strengthens the idea that the tax was imperial, not civic. A second inscription, trilingual in Latin, Greek, and Palmyrene and dated to A.D. 174, is a dedication to another τεταρτώνης, glossed in Latin as *manceps* ("contractor" or "tax farmer") *IIII merc(aturae? -ium adventiciarium?)*.<sup>21</sup> De Laet's conclusion that an imperial customs station at or near Palmyra exacted a 25 percent tax on goods brought into the empire seems valid. He also suggests that graffiti from the Palmyrene gate at Dura, naming civilian customs officials and soldiers (discussed in chaps. 1 and 3), indicate another imperial customs station there, for Euphrates-valley traffic.<sup>22</sup> The employment of soldiers may indicate an imperial, rather than (or in addition to) a municipal, institution. Finally, there is the

16. *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ed. Casson), 19. However, this may have been administered by Nabataeans rather than Romans. See Bowersock, *Roman Arabia*, 70–71. For a recent restatement of the idea that the centurion in charge was Roman, see Young, "The Customs Officer at the Nabataean Port of Leuke Kome." The Domitianic imperial tariff from Koptos in Egypt (*IGRR* I, 1183) is a toll on individuals, assessed at a flat rate in denarii according to status and occupation, and on means of transport, such as boats and donkeys, rather than a customs tariff on goods.

17. See, e.g., De Laet, *Portorium*, 333.

18. *OGIS* II, 629 (= *IGRR* III, 1056). On this, see Matthews, "The Tax Law of Palmyra."

19. De Laet, *Portorium*, 335–36.

20. *AE* 1947, 179.

21. *Ibid.*, 180. The use of the Roman numeral *IIII* to denote a fractional tax is unusual, but *manceps IIII* seems to be a direct translation of τεταρτώνης, and "farmer of a tax of one-quarter" appears the best interpretation of the Greek term.

22. De Laet, *Portorium*, 337.

example of the τελώνης (tax collector) at Zeugma who stopped Apollonius of Tyana as he was about to cross the Euphrates into Mesopotamia and asked him to declare his goods, prompting the sophist to recount his virtues, feminine nouns that the tax collector assumed were prostitutes.<sup>23</sup> Mesopotamia was Parthian territory in the first century A.D. when Apollonius made his crossing, and assuming Philostratus' (Severan) account to be valid, this suggests another imperial customs station on the frontier of the empire. Fronto's *Principia Historiae* refers to *portoria* set up on the Tigris and Euphrates by Trajan in the course of his establishment of the short-lived province of Assyria.<sup>24</sup>

Other dues were charged to the benefit of the imperial government at land boundaries of provinces within the empire and ports used for transit between provinces. The best evidence for *portorium* at such internal boundaries is provided by the Neronian tax law of Asia from Ephesus.<sup>25</sup> There is less evidence from Syria and Mesopotamia. De Laet suggests that customs dues were exacted at all major ports of Syria and Judaea, but only Berytus provides evidence—two inscriptions, Greek and Latin, from Der el-Kala near Beirut, referring to a κοῖνον τριακάδος, or *communis tricensimae*, “a corporation of the thirtieth.”<sup>26</sup> This appears to be a tax, perhaps an import or export tariff. It is probably imperial rather than municipal, as the Palmyra municipal tariff specifies a fixed cash sum paid per commodity while the Berytus inscriptions, like the Leuke Kome tariff, specify a percentage of value.

While agriculture was the greatest source of wealth in the Roman world, on the eastern frontier imperial authorities perhaps were able to realize substantial sums in dues from long-distance trade. This included high-value luxury goods, and a 25 percent rate of tax would allow officials to collect substantial sums.<sup>27</sup> However, there is insufficient evidence to suggest even a rough comparison of the value of the Syrian *portoria* to the empire or their value relative to *tributum capitis* and *tributum soli*.

The third category of tax includes emergency impositions in tax and kind. Of the former, the most prominent was *aurum coronarium*, “crown

23. See Philostratus *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 1.20.

24. Fronto *Princ. Hist.*, Teubner ed., ed. Naber, p. 209.

25. H. Engelmann and D. Knibbe, “Das Zollgesetz der Provinz Asia: Eine neue Inschrift aus Ephesos,” *Epigraphica Anatolica* 14 (1989).

26. *IGRR* III, 1080 and *CIL* III, 6671, discussed by de Laet, *Portortia*, 339–40.

27. Duncan-Jones (*Structure and Scale*, 37, 43) stresses the importance of customs dues as a source of revenue in the east and comments on the potential significance of this in Roman Syria.

gold,” which originated in the Hellenistic world. This could be a gold crown awarded to a ruler by a subject community to celebrate a victory. Real gold crowns were offered to emperors occasionally as late as Julian’s reign, but by the early third century it is clear that the term was used for sporadic impositions of tax in cash.<sup>28</sup> Cassius Dio makes the distinction between tax and real crowns, referring to Caracalla’s expenditure of money on the army.<sup>29</sup> There is no specific evidence regarding imposition in Syria or Mesopotamia, but Isaac discusses evidence for the levying of the tax in Judaea.<sup>30</sup> There were also irregular exactions in kind, including the provision of free or cheap food supplies to the army under such names as *annona*, *copiae*, and *indictiones* in the Principate, perhaps prefiguring the development of a more regular *annona militaris* by the third century. The sketchy evidence for this is collected by Neesen.<sup>31</sup>

As well as taxes, rents from imperial estates were a source of income from the provinces to the central administration. There are a few references to imperial estates in the middle Euphrates. For example, the village of Beth Phrouria is described as a κώμη κυριακή in two papyri, and *praedia fiscalia* near Appadana (perhaps the same estate) are mentioned in a document of A.D. 221 from Dura-Europos.<sup>32</sup> An inscription from Bab el Hawa east of Antioch records the gift of land there to an exiled

28. See Neesen, *Untersuchungen zu den direkten Staatsabgaben*, 142–45; Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, 140–42. It seems to have been a tax in Ptolemaic territories much earlier and continued to be levied in Seleucid Judaea as στεφανιτικός φόρος; see M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (1953), 469.

29. Cassius Dio 77.9.2.

30. Isaac, *Limits*, 301. A document from the Babatha archive (*P.Yadin* 16) refers to “crown tax” as a fixed cash component of tax (otherwise taken in kind) on agricultural land in Arabia in A.D. 127. This evidence may indicate that the term was generally applied to a regular tax at this early date, or it may refer to a purely local tax taken over from the Nabataean kings. See H.M. Cotton, “Rent or Receipt from Moaza,” *ZPE* 100 (1994): 547–57, at 553–54; B. Isaac, “The Babatha Archive: A Review Article,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 42 (1992): 62–75, at 66.

31. Neesen, *Untersuchungen zu den direkten Staatsabgaben*, 106–12. For example, Pliny (*Panegyricus* 29) refers to payment of fair prices for agricultural produce during Trajan’s reign, contrasting earlier times when it was carried off *ut ex hostico raptae* [as if looted from the enemy]. Pliny does not make specific reference to army supply, but Cassius Dio (77.9.3, continuing the passage on *aurum coronarium* cited in n. 29, above) refers to Caracalla’s exaction of supplies (ἐπιτηδεία) from the empire, which were either passed on to the army or sold. Alston, in *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt*, 110, refers to evidence from Egypt suggesting that troops’ direct acquisition of supplies sometimes were offset against taxes rather than pure requisition.

32. Feissel and Gascou, “Documents” (1989), 541; *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 229–34, no. 64.

Persian prince in Constantine's reign and may be evidence for an imperial estate. Tchalenko suggests that it had been imperial property for a long time, perhaps former Seleucid royal land that came into imperial possession.<sup>33</sup> Rey-Coquais has argued that other imperial properties existed in southern Syria, including areas annexed from the Herodian kingdoms by Trajan, because on inscriptions certain areas date by imperial regnal year rather than by the local eras used within city territories.<sup>34</sup> The Dura papyrus just cited shows issuing of food to soldiers from stocks on the estate administered by an imperial freedman, so payment of rent in kind may have been normal, as in Africa.<sup>35</sup>

Thus there is some evidence for taxes collected in Roman Syria during the Principate. However, we lack quantitative perspective on this taxation. It is impossible even to make conclusions about the relative value of different forms of tax to the state. In most provinces of the empire, one may assert safely that taxes on agricultural production were most important. In Syria and Mesopotamia the importance of *portoria* casts some doubt on that assertion. We know little about the scale and frequency of emergency food supplies to the army, so we cannot compare them to other, more regular forms of taxation. We may assume they had a significant impact in a heavily militarized province like Syria. We cannot get a clear idea of the total value of Syria to imperial finances, although we might assume that it was great.

### Money, the Army, and the Economy in the Principate

As I remarked earlier, it seems probable that most of the taxes exacted from Roman Syria in the Principate were in cash. Given the wealth of the province and its long tradition of monetization, it is unlikely that it had to "buy

33. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 1: 114–17, 393 (= *IGLS* II, 528). Documents dealing with land tenure and taxation in Arabia and Judaea show that imperial property acquired from former client kings was common and was often mixed in with privately owned property (*P. Yadin* 11, 13). See Cotton, "Rent or Receipt from Moaza" and "Land Tenure in the Documents from the Nabataean Kingdom and the Roman Province of Arabia," *ZPE* 119 (1997): 255–65; Isaac, "The Babatha Archive," 70f. These documents also suggest a certain blurring of the distinction between tax and rent on such property.

34. J.-P. Rey-Coquais, "Une Inscription du Liban nord," *MUSJ* 47 (1972): 87–105, especially 94–97, citing evidence from northern Lebanon, the Djebel Druze, and the Hauran.

35. E.g., such payment is attested on an inscription from Henchir-Mettich; see *CIL* VIII, 25902, discussed in D.P. Kehoe, *The Economics of Agriculture on Roman Imperial Estates in North Africa* (1988), 29–55. If the documents from Judaea/Arabia refer to rent rather than tax, it is predominantly in kind.

back” cash for goods and services from the central administration to pay cash taxes as implied by Hopkins’ model.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, we may consider whether there is evidence for “cycling” of currency between the imperial government, army, and provincial populations as Hopkins proposed.

Duncan-Jones suggested that transmission of army pay was important for the apparent monetary homogeneity within the empire that Hopkins attributes to interregional trade.<sup>37</sup> Consideration of army pay and army supply within the regional economy prompts several important questions. First, what was the scale of army pay and was it primarily in cash or in kind? Second, if army pay was primarily in cash, did soldiers pay coin to acquire goods and services from civilians, in a regional version of Hopkins’ empire-wide “cycling” of coinage between taxpaying and tax-consuming provinces? Finally, what evidence is there for military activity affecting distribution and even production of coinage on the eastern frontier during the Principate?

### The Scale and Nature of Army Pay

Fairly reliable evidence survives for the gross pay of individual legionaries in the first two centuries A.D. This was 225 denarii per annum to the reign of Domitian and (perhaps from A.D. 83/4, on the basis of Cassius Dio 67.3.5) thereafter 300 denarii.<sup>38</sup> There were increases in the reigns of Septimius Severus and Caracalla, perhaps to 450 or 500 and 675 or 750 denarii, respectively.<sup>39</sup> Auxiliary pay was more complex in structure and is less well documented. Estimates for the basic pay of a soldier of an auxiliary *cohors quingenaria* have ranged from one-third to five-sixths of the legionary rate.<sup>40</sup> However, recent publication of a document from Vindonissa in Switzerland provides decisive evidence that the basic rate

36. See Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale*, 43.

37. *Ibid.*, 38, 44.

38. See Tac. *Ann.* 1.17; Suetonius *Domitian* 7.3. Cf. G.R. Watson, *The Roman Soldier* (1964), 89–91. However, see M.A. Speidel, “Roman Army Pay Scales,” *JRS* 83 (1992): 87–106; Speidel suggests three hundred and four hundred denarii, respectively, apparently based on a looser reading of Tacitus and on the assumption that Cassius Dio 67.3.5 refers to a pay rise *additional* to Domitian’s introduction of the *quartum stipendium* rather than being a garbled account of the same thing.

39. See Watson, *The Roman Soldier*, 91.

40. See references in R. MacMullen, “The Roman Emperors’ Army Costs,” *Latomus* 43 (1984): 578. The argument for the higher figure is based on the assumption that *P.Gen.Lat.* I, recto 1 refers to auxiliaries rather than legionaries as Watson and others believed. See M.P. Speidel, “The Pay of the *Auxilia*,” *JRS* 63 (1973): 141–47.

of auxiliary pay was five-sixths basic legionary pay.<sup>41</sup> Soldiers in different auxiliary units (infantry, cavalry, etc.) were paid at different rates, as were soldiers of different ranks in legions and auxiliary units.

MacMullen produced a formula for approximate calculation of the total pay of the Roman army based on the number of “base pay” units (“base pay” being equal to the pay of a legionary ranker) consumed by each of the types of unit that made up the army. He allows for different rates of pay for different types and ranks of soldier, and modification of his formula to incorporate the new evidence that the basic auxiliary rate was five-sixths the legionary rate enables us to form a very rough estimate of the pay of the garrison of Syria.<sup>42</sup> The year A.D. 88 is a convenient date for this calculation because of two military diplomas from that year that list nearly the complete auxiliary garrison of the province.<sup>43</sup>

<i>Unit type</i> <sup>44</sup>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Annual pay per unit</i>	<i>Total</i>
quingenary cohorts	18	585 base units	10,530 base units
milliary cohort	1	1,170 base units	1,170 base units
quingenary <i>alae</i>	8	1,045 base units	8,360 base units
legions	3	6,622 base units	19,866 base units
			<hr/> 39,926 base units

This total must be multiplied by 300 denarii to give the annual total pay for the province after the pay increase in the reign of Domitian in A.D. 83/4. This totals 11,977,800 denarii per annum, about one-tenth of the total cost of the Roman army throughout the empire as estimated by MacMullen and modified to include the new auxiliary pay figures.

Other forms of income were received by soldiers. Donatives by emperors to ensure loyalty were given fairly sparingly and on a modest scale (except to the Praetorian Guard) during the first two centuries A.D. Augustus gave 75 denarii each to legionaries; Septimius Severus gave 250 each to the Danube legionaries, although they asked for ten times that

41. M. A. Speidel, “Roman Army Pay Scales.”

42. MacMullen, “The Roman Emperors’ Army Costs,” 578–80, app.

43. *CIL* XVI, 35; *RMD* 1, no. 3.

44. Only one cohort is specifically described as milliary, although others (here assumed to be quingenary) may have been so too. No *ala* is described as milliary, although some may have been.

amount.<sup>45</sup> Tiberius gave the Syrian legionaries an unspecified donative for their loyalty during Sejanus' revolt, a rare action for that emperor.<sup>46</sup> Discharge bonuses for veterans were more substantial, 3,000 denarii in the reign of Augustus, 5,000 denarii in the reign of Caracalla.<sup>47</sup>

This suggests that substantial amounts of cash might come into the economy of Roman Syria via the army. However, as Duncan-Jones indicated, several factors reduced the amount of cash available for recirculation into the civilian economy.<sup>48</sup> The first is that soldiers were kept on beyond their terms of service when money was not available to pay their discharge bonuses. The second, according to Duncan-Jones, is that units were kept significantly under strength, especially during peacetime.<sup>49</sup> The third is that soldiers were not paid in full, as deductions were made from their pay at source. During the Pannonian revolt in Tiberius' reign, mutineers complained of having to pay for weapons, clothing, and tents.<sup>50</sup> A papyrus from Egypt, dated to A.D. 81, records accounts of two soldiers, probably legionaries, coincidentally from Tyre and Damascus. What they actually record is disputed, but probably they list sums deposited to a unit bank.<sup>51</sup> Each soldier deposited three installments of 247½ drachmas.

45. See Watson, *The Roman Soldier*, 109–14.

46. See Suetonius *Tiberius* 48.

47. See Cassius Dio 55.23, 78.36.

48. Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale*, 44.

49. On this, Duncan-Jones (*Structure and Scale*, 44) cites P. Brunt's article "Conscription and Volunteering in the Roman Imperial Army," *Roman Imperial Themes* (1990), 188–214. However, Brunt considers whether there was regular conscription into the Roman army (and concludes that there was), not whether units were consistently understrength. M.H. Crawford ("Finance, Coinage, and Money from the Severans to Constantine," *ANRW* II.2 [1975]: 591) has argued, from sources attesting that war was more expensive than peace, that because units were understrength in peacetime and brought up to strength in wartime, wartime expenditures were higher because more soldiers had to be paid. However, additional expense of wartime might be the result of increased purchase and movement of supplies: see A.R. Birley, "The Third-Century Crisis in the Roman Empire," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library, Manchester* 58 (1976): 253–81, at 260 n. 1 (citing additional requirements for arms, armor, matériel, road and bridge building, repair of damage, and remounts); Potter, *Prophecy and History*, 65 (on transport). The scale of logistical support required for campaigns on the eastern frontier is discussed later in this chapter. Hence units may not have been so understrength as to significantly reduce the regular cost of the army.

50. Tac. *Ann.* 1.17 reads: *denis in diem assibus animam et corpus aestimari; hinc vestem, arma tentoria . . . redimi*. [[he said that] a soldier's life and body were reckoned at ten asses per day; out of this came clothing, weapons, and bivouac].

51. *P.Gen.Lat.* I, recto 1, a recent edition of which is Fink, *Roman Military Records*, 243–49, no. 68, which summarizes controversies concerning the nature of the document. The argument turns on whether the individuals are legionaries or auxiliaries. If the former

Deductions were made from each installment, the largest for food (240 drachmas each over the year) and clothing (one paid 206 drachmas, the other 246). However, soldiers may have been issued with food free of charge by A.D. 218, as an innovation of Septimius Severus or Caracalla.<sup>52</sup> In the third pay period of the year, one soldier lost all his installment in deductions. Whether these deductions went into the provincial civilian economy as cash depended on whether the army bought a significant quantity of food and clothing in cash from civilian sources within the province. Also, a substantial proportion of soldiers' pay was accumulated as savings in army-run banks,<sup>53</sup> and much entered the civilian economy only if and when the soldier retired into local communities. Watson notes that donatives were given in multiples of twenty-five denarii and hence perhaps in *aurei* of that value.<sup>54</sup> Such high-value coins were particularly suited to saving. Hence it is probable that much less cash came into the economy through soldiers than initial examination suggests.

#### Economic Transactions between the Army and Civilians

The next issue regarding cycling of coinage between soldiers and civilians in Roman Syria and Mesopotamia is the evidence of economic transactions between them. This issue can be considered on two levels. One is whether individual soldiers spent cash on goods and services from civilians.<sup>55</sup> The

(as argued by G.R. Watson in "The Pay of the Roman Army: Suetonius, Dio, and the *Quartium Stipendium*," *Historia* 5 (1956): 332–40, and "The Pay of the Roman Army: The Auxiliary Forces," *Historia* 8 (1959): 372–78), then the accounts probably represent three payments of seventy-five denarii from which the soldier has been given spending money that does not appear in the accounts. This would explain why the accounts record less than the known annual legionary pay at that time. If they are auxiliaries with the *tria nomina* (perhaps recruited as citizens), then the accounts record the total wages of the men before any deductions, at some five-sixths of the legionary rate. This argument was advanced by M.P. Speidel ("The Pay of the *Auxilia*") and appears to have been proven by the recent evidence from Vindonissa (M.A. Speidel, "Roman Army Pay Scales") that basic auxiliary pay was, indeed, five-sixths that of legionaries.

52. Cassius Dio 78.34.3 records how τροφή was restored to the soldiers in that year. This must mean food rather than any form of payment.

53. See Watson, *The Roman Soldier*, 104–7.

54. *Ibid.*, 114.

55. The degree to which coinage-based transactions between individual soldiers and civilians were significant in the regional economy as a whole is unclear. M. Crawford, in "Money and Coinage in the Roman World," *JRS* 60 (1970): 44f., points out that small bronze coins are rare in army camps on the Rhine frontier and suggests they were not a common means of exchange there. However, he contrasts that situation with Dura-Europos, where a great deal of small change was found, some of it undoubtedly used by

second level is that of transactions by complete military units or the provincial garrison as a whole. We have seen that deductions were made from soldiers' pay for food, clothing, and weapons, and hence these things were acquired by the army at a unit or higher level. If these items were purchased by the army for issue to individual soldiers from within the region in cash, then coinage was cycled as if the soldiers bought them directly from local civilians. However, cycling of coinage within Syria and Mesopotamia did not take place if the army brought in supplies from outside the region, either for cash or as tax in kind.<sup>56</sup>

In theory it may have been easiest for an army unit in a province where tax was paid in cash to buy supplies for cash from local sources where they existed. Conversely, in provinces where tax in kind was usual (especially if army requisitions were collected in kind and offset against taxes) or where major resources were available directly to authorities (such as imperial estates), one might expect army supplies to arrive in kind more frequently, from tax and rent revenues. Either option enabled authorities to use locally available supplies and reduce the difficulties of bulk transport characteristic of the Roman world. There are references to the cash acquisition of supplies by the army from Egypt, where land tax was collected in kind.<sup>57</sup>

However, there is only one clear example of the purchase of commodities from Syria, a reference to soldiers of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, detached from the garrison of Dura-Europos, *missi ad hor(deum) comparandum* [sent out to buy barley], perhaps for soldiers or for animals in the unit.<sup>58</sup> The soldiers were away from their unit but apparently near Dura,

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soldiers. In contrast to army bases in Germany, Syrian bases were in a region with a longer tradition of coin use and were often in or adjacent to cities, where they had more opportunities to use them than in the rural areas and *canabae* of Germany.

56. Whittaker, in *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 98–131, provides a useful discussion of the mechanisms of army supply.

57. In *P.Grenf.* I.48 (A.D. 191) a soldier of a Gallic *ala* records that he obtained at Soknopaiou Nesos barley put up for sale by the *πραγματικός* and that he paid “the usual price to you” [τὴν ἐξ ἑθους τιμὴν ὑμῖν]. Perhaps this was government compulsory purchase, with the “usual price” fixed by the government rather than a market price. Nevertheless, cash seems to have changed hands from army to civilians. See S.L. Wallace, *Taxation in Egypt* (1938), 22, on *πυρὸς συναγοραστικός*. Also see *P.Oxy.* 2230 (early second century), indicating that an army contract for two hundred blankets was undertaken for cash by the cloth dealers of Heracleopolis; *P.Gen.* 35 records acquisition of camels for *ala veterana Gallica*. The text is fragmentary, but a reference to “drachmas of silver” suggests that the army paid for the animals.

58. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 270–78, no. 82 (= Fink, *Roman Military Records*, no. 47), col. ii, line 4, discussed on p. 41 of that volume.

within the cohort's area of dispersed deployment revealed by papyri. Several other documents from Dura refer to men sent out to acquire grain (*ad frumentum* or *ad hordeum*),<sup>59</sup> although it is unclear whether this was to buy supplies or to collect them in kind. At the very least it implies acquisition of supplies from local sources. One clear example of acquisition of supplies by nonmarket means comes in a papyrus from Dura-Europos of A.D. 221, referring to an issue of barley to a detachment of soldiers at nearby Appadana by an imperial freedman *ex praedis fiscalibus* [from fiscal estates].<sup>60</sup> This implies direct transfer of rent in kind from an imperial estate as provisions for soldiers. Such transfers perhaps were typical where there were imperial estates. Also it is probable that even supplies that were paid for could be bought at prices below local market value by the army, exercising official or unofficial authority and intimidation.

Other texts interpreted as referring to acquisition of army supplies at Dura come from the "House of Nebuchelus," outside the military camp area.<sup>61</sup> Graffiti there listed commodities—including food, clothes, hay, and wool—and prices. Despite the editors' suggestions, there is little evidence of army involvement, and several transactions clearly involve civilians. One of them is as follows.

ἄρτος εἰς Σούραν × III  
 σῖτος × X  
 κριθή × XII  
 οἶνος × IIII<sup>62</sup>

[bread to Sura, three denarii  
 grain, ten denarii  
 barley, twelve denarii  
 wine, four denarii]

The editors claimed that this represented "part of the *annona* collected in kind for the less fertile regions up river," based on the likelihood that there was a Roman garrison at Sura at this time. In fact, any relation to the *annona* is improbable. If the supplies were collected in kind, it is strange that their value is expressed in cash, and it is more likely that they

59. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 41.

60. *Ibid.*, 229–34, no. 64 (= Fink, *Roman Military Records*, no. 91).

61. *Dura* 4, 79–145.

62. *Ibid.*, 86, no. 200.

were destined for civilians, who undoubtedly inhabited Sura too. This house, probably a commercial center of some sort, provides only one piece of evidence for involvement of soldiers, namely, a graffito dedication to a Palmyrene rider/cavalryman.<sup>63</sup>

The basic assumption that supplies were acquired locally for cash whenever possible is undermined by evidence for regular acquisition of supplies in kind or for the long-distance transport of supplies from outside of the province, acquired either for cash (thus dispersed out of the regional economy) or in kind. There is some evidence for the irregular acquisition of supplies in kind by the army throughout the Principate. This practice may have been regular by the third century and was the norm by the end of that century. There is also evidence for the long-distance transport of supplies to the army in the east. Detachments of the Misenum and Ravenna fleets were based at Seleucia Pieria, and there was imperial and military involvement in harbor works to facilitate the movement of troops and supplies to the eastern frontier. This logistical support of armies on the eastern frontier from Seleucia Pieria has been discussed in some detail by van Berchem.<sup>64</sup> Supplies could be brought from all over the eastern Mediterranean to Seleucia and moved up the Orontes to Gephyra, east of Antioch. The next major river suitable for transport was the Euphrates, requiring a long journey on the extensive road system of the province, particularly the route from Antioch to Zeugma via Cyrrhus.<sup>65</sup> Such transport of supplies and troops from the Mediterranean explains the dedication to Q. Marcius Turbo, prefect of the Misenum fleet, found at Cyrrhus. The editor, Frézouls, suggests that Cyrrhus was the place of concentration for Trajan's expedition against Armenia in A.D. 114.<sup>66</sup> A papyrus of A.D. 166, the end of Lucius Verus' Parthian war, records that a sailor at Seleucia Pieria bought a Mesopotamian slave from an officer of the Misenum fleet.<sup>67</sup> Elements of the fleet probably accompanied the army deep into

63. Ibid., 82–83, no. 190.

64. D. van Berchem, "Le Port de Séleucie de Piérie," 65–83.

65. The roads of Syria are well known from the aerial surveys of Poidebard (*La Trace de Rome*; Mousterde and Poidebard, *Le Limes de Chalcis*) and Stein (Gregory and Kennedy, *Sir Aurel Stein's Limes Report*). See also T. Bauzou, "Les Routes romaines de Syrie," *Archéologie et histoire de la Syrie*, vol. 2, *La Syrie de l'époque achéménide à l'avènement de l'Islam*, ed. J.-M. Dentzer and W. Orthmann (1989), 205–22.

66. AE 1955, 225; E. Frézouls, "Inscription de Cyrrhus relative à Q. Marcius Turbo," *Syria* 30 (1953): 247–78; R. Syme ("The Wrong Marcius Turbo," in *Roman Papers*, vol. 2, (ed. E. Badian [1979], 541–56, at 553–54) agrees with this identification.

67. *FIRA*<sup>2</sup> III, 132.

Parthian territory, and the officer probably had acquired the slave there himself. Papyri of *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* at Dura-Europos record men engaged in duties involving ships (*ad naves d. f.*) in the first half of the third century A.D., and one refers to a barley ship (*navem hor[d]*), probably transporting supplies.<sup>68</sup>

Other inscriptions attest to the scale of army supply required for large-scale wars on the eastern frontier. An inscription from Lyons records the procuratorial career of C. Furius Sabinius Timesitheus, described as *proc(uratori) prov(inciae) Sy(riae) Palaestinae ibi exactori reliquor(um) annonae sacrae expeditio(nis)* [procurator of the province of Syria Palestine and collector there of the remainder of the food supply for the divine campaign] in A.D. 231/2 for Severus Alexander's Persian war.<sup>69</sup> Timesitheus may not have administered supplies specifically from beyond Syro-Palestine, but three inscriptions from Cilicia indicate that supplies were procured there for eastern frontier wars in the mid-third century. The first records the career of Aurelius Mandrianus Longinus, a βουλευτής (councillor) of the city of Side and high priest of the imperial cult. He is described as παραπέμψαντα ἱερὰς ἀννῶνας εἰς τὸ Σύρων ἔθνος τρίς [sending the sacred *annona* to the province of the Syrians thrice]. Potter and the *Année Épigraphique* editors suggest that this took place at the time of Gordian III's campaigns against the Persians.<sup>70</sup> A second inscription records Apronianus Caelianus παραπέμψαντα εὐετηρίαν τ[ο]ῖς εἰεροῖς στρατεύμασιν δῖς [sending bounty to the sacred armies twice], and the *Année Épigraphique* editors suggest that these events took place during the campaigns of Severus Alexander and Gordian III.<sup>71</sup> Finally, there is an inscription of M. Aurelius Obrimianus, a citizen of Casae and Side, ἀν[ωναν] παραπέμψαντα ἰς τὸ Σύ[ρων] ἔθ[νος] καὶ πρεσβεύσαντα[προῖκα πρὸς θεὸν Ἀλέξανδρον] [sending *annona* to

68. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 41 (general discussion and references); 308–39, no. 100, col. xix, line 4 (= Fink, *Roman Military Records*, no. 1)

69. *CIL* XIII, 1807 (= *ILS* 1330). For the date, see K. Dietz, *Senatus contra Principem* (1980), 294. For Timesitheus, see H.-G. Pflaum, *Le Marbre de Thorigny* (1948), 53–62, and *Les Carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le haut-empire romain*, vol. 2 (1960), 811–21.

70. *AE* 1972, 626; Potter, *Prophecy and History*, 195 n. 30. These sources argue for a single war of three years in the reign of Gordian III rather than three separate wars (Caracalla, Elagabalus, and Alexander Severus). The latter is the suggestion of G. Bean and T.B. Mitford (*Journeys in Rough Cilicia* [1970], no. 19) and is followed by S. Mitchell (“The Balkans, Anatolia, and Roman Armies across Asia Minor,” in *Armies and Frontiers in Roman and Byzantine Anatolia* [1983], 142).

71. *AE* 1972, 627. Again, perhaps these two events took place during a single war.

the province of the Syrians and serving as ambassador to the divine Alexander].<sup>72</sup> These inscriptions show that the supply of large armies on the eastern frontier had an impact beyond the confines of Syria and Mesopotamia, and they illustrate the transport of army supplies as a liturgy imposed on leading citizens of provincial communities.<sup>73</sup> A likely route for these supplies was overland from Cilicia into Syria and east to the Euphrates, perhaps at Zeugma. However, this long-distance army supply may not have been a regular feature of the Principate. Virtually all of the evidence relates to periods of exceptional military concentration in the east, most of it in the third century when exaction of tax in kind for delivery to the army may have been the norm. It is likely that the regular garrison of the province could be supplied from the resources of the province itself and probably acquired this food for cash.

Besides infrastructure, port facilities, and roads, there is little archaeological evidence for long-distance army supply. Very few imported Roman amphorae can be recognized in the published pottery from Dura-Europos. Most large vessels there were storage jars, probably of local production and not suited to transport.<sup>74</sup> However, one single complete example of the form known as the "hollow-foot amphora," generally thought to have been produced in the third and fourth centuries A.D., was found at Dura.<sup>75</sup> There is another from the Mesopotamian fort site of Ain Sinu II, of the early third century, where, unlike at Dura, there is no evidence for civilian occupation.<sup>76</sup> Other fragments were found in the excavation of the late Roman fortress of el-Lejjun, in central Jordan (Roman Arabia).<sup>77</sup> An Aegean origin has been suggested for these amphorae on the grounds of their distribution, and their contents are unknown, although wine has been suggested.<sup>78</sup> Many examples have been found at

72. AE 1972, 628.

73. This evidence for *angaria*, the liturgy of transporting official supplies, comes from Cilicia, but undoubtedly it had a major impact on Syrian and Mesopotamian cities too. See Isaac, *Limits*, 291–97.

74. See S.L. Dyson, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*, Final Report IV, pt. 1, fasc. 3. *The Commonware Pottery, The Brittle Ware* (1968) (hereafter cited as *Dura Final Report* 4.1.3.)

75. *Dura Final Report* 4.1.3, 18, no. 66. Cf. D.P.S. Peacock and D.F. Williams, *Amphorae and the Roman Economy* (1986), 193–95, class 47. The rather sketchy descriptions of the fabrics of the examples discussed here apparently conform to the fabric described by Peacock and Williams.

76. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 149, app. B, fig. 22, no. 60.

77. S.T. Parker, "The Pottery," in *The Roman Frontier in Central Jordan: Interim Report on the Limes Arabicus Project, 1980–85* (1987), 529.

78. Peacock and Williams, *Amphorae and the Roman Economy*, 193–95.

nonmilitary sites,<sup>79</sup> but the previously cited examples may be connected with official supply. It is difficult to construct a pattern of army supply from such limited evidence, but it is interesting to find even one example preserved at a military site far inland in Mesopotamia, where imported amphorae are rare. Again, this evidence refers to the third century and may not be relevant for much of the Principate.

There is not much evidence for the participation of individual soldiers in the economic life of the province, and there is no good reason why such evidence should survive in any quantity. One of the few pieces of evidence from the region that does survive refers to the sale of a boat *by* a soldier *to* a civilian, the opposite of the form of transaction one might hope to find.<sup>80</sup>

Even the entertainers' guild center/brothel at Dura seems to have been army administered, rather than a purely local civilian enterprise. At least a proportion of the prostitutes and entertainers there were slaves, and given the evidence for army involvement discussed earlier, it is likely that they were army-owned slaves, comparable to army-owned gladiators, individuals of similarly low status.<sup>81</sup> No prices are specified in the graffiti, which may indicate either that the house was not a place of work or that cash transactions did not take place. This casts doubt on the scale of economic exchange between soldiers and local civilians at Dura even in such a fundamental and traditional area of economic exchange as prostitution, and it may imply limited participation in the local cash economy by the army there.

Another approach to documenting economic interaction between soldiers and civilians is examination of pottery from military sites. The most sophisticated work of this kind has been done in the west, particularly in studies of Roman Britain. It is much more difficult in Syria and Mesopotamia because of the scarcity of well-excavated military sites with published pottery. Likewise, few civilian sites have been excavated and published sufficiently to provide comparative evidence. In the west it is clear that pottery sometimes was produced by the army for its own use. Other pottery was acquired from civilian potters. There is no evidence that this

79. E.g., H.S. Robinson, *The Athenian Agora*, vol. 5, *Pottery of the Roman Period, Chronology* (1959), K113, dated to the mid-third century.

80. Feissel and Gascou, "Documents" (1989), 557, no. 11. Of course, the soldier may have bought the boat from a civilian in the first place.

81. For army ownership of gladiators, see T. Weidemann, *Emperors and Gladiators* (1992), 45f.

was ever taken as tax in kind. Probably it was purchased by units and distributed to soldiers for deductions in their pay, purchased communally by units, or bought by individuals directly from civilian potters.<sup>82</sup> One papyrus document shows the acquisition of pots by an individual soldier in Egypt who sent his father (another soldier) twelve *calices*.<sup>83</sup> We might examine the pottery from military sites in the region to see if there is any evidence for where it was produced.

Tell el Hajj is the only excavated and well-published fort of early imperial Syria. It lies west of the Euphrates, about a hundred miles due east of Antioch. The date of construction is unknown, but excavators suggest before A.D. 88. At different times it was garrisoned by the *cohors secunda pia fidelis* named on tile stamps and the *cohors milliaria Thracum* attested in an inscription found there.<sup>84</sup> Little information was published regarding the pottery, but there is a reference to “the significant quantity of fine pottery, like terra sigillata,” and “a series of lamps including some decorated with a laurel wreath, imported from Antioch.”<sup>85</sup> This does not imply anything but acquisition from civilian sources within the province. Presumably, much of the terra sigillata was Eastern Sigillata A, probably produced in Syria, and common even on inland Hellenistic and early Roman civilian sites in Syria, such as Hama.<sup>86</sup>

In contrast is the more extensively published pottery from the forts at Ain Sinu of the early third century A.D., excavated by Oates.<sup>87</sup> He describes the assemblage as “for the most part Parthian in character,” likening it to (unpublished) pottery excavated at Hatra as “a typical sample of North Mesopotamian pottery of the latest Parthian period, which was sufficient in both quality and quantity to make the import of western

82. All these forms of acquisition of pottery are discussed in D.J. Breeze, “The Fort at Bearden and the Supply of Pottery to the Roman Army,” in *Roman Pottery Studies in Britain and Beyond*, ed. J. Dore and K. Greene (1977), 136–38.

83. *P.Mich.* 568 (early second century A.D.): *vitriae et phialas quinarias p[ar u]num et calices paria sex*.

84. There is a brief description in Bridel and Stucky, “Tell el Hajj, place forte.”

85. *Ibid.* 351.

86. The most recent discussion of the origins of ESA (and the current state of studies of this pottery) is that of K.W. Slane, “The Fine Wares” in *Tel Anafa* vol. 2, pt. 1: *The Hellenistic and Roman Pottery*, ed. S.C. Herbert (1997): 247–406. On the basis of distribution and neutron activation analysis, Slane (272) suggests that ESA was produced from a single clay source in Syria, probably northern Syria. For Hama, see A.P. Christensen and C.F. Johansen, *Hama: Fouilles et recherches 1931–1938*, iii.2, *Les poteries hellénistiques et les terres sigillées orientales* (1971).

87. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 145–60, app. B.

products unnecessary.”<sup>88</sup> Much of it was Parthian ware with a green glaze, in forms similar to those of Parthian Seleucia on the Tigris. Also there were two-handled table amphorae similar to Parthian glazed vessels, but those at Ain Sinu were unglazed and decorated with impressed diamond decoration, like pots found at Hatra. The lamps, too, were characteristic of Hatra. Oates emphasized this similarity with Hatra, and it seems likely that the Ain Sinu pottery was acquired locally from civilian potters. Pottery from Kifrin is not fully published, but excavators refer to “common pottery characteristic of the Middle Euphrates and glazed ware belonging to the Parthian tradition.”<sup>89</sup>

At Dura-Europos we encounter the problem of distinguishing pottery used by the army from that used by civilians. Also there is virtually no stratigraphic evidence for dating, and it is difficult to determine what was in use during the Roman occupation, except when the pottery is dated by external comparanda. Most of it is Parthian green glazed ware, with local coarsewares in Parthian and Hellenistic forms.<sup>90</sup> There is some imported red-slipped ware, mostly Eastern Sigillata A, from before Roman occupation of Dura, showing that Roman political control was not necessary for the import of “Mediterranean” pottery. There is also later African Red Slip ware, but imported finewares are insignificant compared to the pottery in Parthian traditions.<sup>91</sup> Thus all of the sites examined appear to have obtained most of their pottery from local civilian sources, and the assemblages appear comparable to the limited evidence from local civilian sites.

A departure from this pattern is what Dyson, publishing pottery from Dura-Europos, calls “brittle ware,” describing it as “hard baked, brick red clay of almost metallic quality which is thin and easily broken.” He adds that this was in less common use than the regular coarse fabric. The brittle ware seems to have been imported.<sup>92</sup> He suggests that much of it came from later (third-century) contexts on the site. Some vessels had horizontal ribbing and came in a variety of forms, including casseroles (some stone tempered) and round-bottomed two-handled cook pots,

88. *Ibid.*, 146.

89. Valtz, “Kifrin, the ‘Limes’ Fortress,” 120.

90. For green glazed wares and coarsewares at Dura, see N.P. Toll, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*, Final Report IV, pt. 1, fasc. 1: *The Green Glazed Pottery* (1943) and *Dura-Europos Final Report* 4.1.3.

91. For the Eastern Sigillata and African Red Slip ware at Dura see D.H. Cox, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*, Final Report IV, pt. 1, fasc. 2: *The Greek and Roman Pottery* (1949).

92. *Dura Final Report* 4.1.3, 58.

both with Hellenistic antecedents. Dyson refers to parallels at Ain Sinu, where Oates found “thin, hard, very gritty, rubbed red ware, obviously designed to withstand heat.”<sup>93</sup> Forms at Ain Sinu included casserole and cook-pot forms like at Dura. Finally the excavators of Kifrin refer to “kitchen ware, typical of all sites subject to Roman influence.”<sup>94</sup>

This pottery raises the following questions: Did it all come from one place? Did it come from outside the region? How did it get to the sites where it were used? The fabrics and forms seem very similar, but vessels designed for a common purpose (cooking, with a requirement to withstand thermal shock) do have common requirements. Such cookware fabrics are familiar from a range of sites in the eastern Mediterranean, and long-distance trade in specialized cookwares is a phenomenon that has been recognized recently. It is difficult to tell if similarities are due to common manufacture or common functional requirements. It suggests that long-distance supply routes related to military acquisition and provisioning, to private trade, or to both. Similar pottery has been found on civilian sites investigated by survey in the area east of the Euphrates to the south of Samosata, so civilian long-distance trade seems the most likely solution.<sup>95</sup>

For the most part, then, the limited evidence available for the pottery used by the army in Syria and Mesopotamia suggests that it was acquired locally when available, probably for cash. Pottery may not have been the most important commodity for army supply, but it survives, and its evidence may shed light on the acquisition of more perishable goods.

### The Army, Taxation, and the Production and Movement of Coinage in the East

The range of coinage circulating in Syria in the Principate was complicated by the existence of local and Roman traditions, which formed two distinct components.<sup>96</sup> The “Roman” tradition was represented in silver by the denarius coinage. Silver denarii appear to have been common in

93. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 150.

94. Valtz, “Kifrin, the ‘Limes’ Fortress,” 120.

95. See T.J. Wilkinson, *Town and Country in Southeastern Anatolia*, vol. 1, *Settlement and Land Use at Kurban Höyük and Other Sites in the Lower Karababa Basin* (1990), 114.

96. A useful survey is K. Butcher, “Coinage and Currency in Syria and Palestine to the Reign of Gallienus,” in *Coin Finds and Coin Use in the Roman World*, ed. C.E. King and D.G. Wigg (1996), 101–12. Butcher’s forthcoming monograph on the coinage of Roman Syria will be very welcome.

Syria by the second century A.D. but much less so in the first century. In fact, it is debatable whether they circulated there at all for much of that century.<sup>97</sup> Subsequently, most denarii found in the east were produced at the mint of Rome, but occasional issues were made at mints in Syria and Mesopotamia, particularly in times of civil war, such as the very end of the second century A.D. and the first decades of the third century. In the second decade of the third century, a new denomination, the double denarius, or *antoninianus*, was introduced. It was larger, heavier, and initially, at least, of purer silver than the contemporary denarius. Initially it was minted at Rome, but soon it was produced at Antioch and Emesa too. By the mid-third century it had replaced the denarius entirely. Most gold *aurei* were produced at the mint of Rome. Bronze coinage of the mint of Rome (which circulated in the west) was relatively rare in the east. However, there were “imperial” issues of bronze coin, with the imperial portrait and Latin legends on the obverse and the letters SC in a laurel wreath as the reverse. These issues may have been in Roman denominations (*asses*) and began in the reign of Augustus, probably ca. 6 or 5 B.C., and continued until the third century A.D.<sup>98</sup> Most were produced in Antioch, but some were minted in other Syrian centers, and some, apparently, were even produced at the mint of Rome itself for circulation in the east, distinct from issues produced there for circulation in the central and western empire.<sup>99</sup>

In contrast to the Roman imperial tradition were the “local” coinages, based in part on Hellenistic traditions, referred to by numismatists as “Greek Imperials.”<sup>100</sup> These included silver and bronze issues. The continued importance of these local traditions meant that Syria (like other eastern provinces) was not fully integrated into the Roman imperial monetary system in the way that western provinces were, and this fact complicates notions of empire-wide circulation, such as those of Hopkins. From

97. For the argument that denarii did not circulate in Syria before, perhaps, the reign of Vespasian, see *Roman Provincial Coinage* I, 12–13, 29, 587. This contention is, however, based on very limited evidence, much of it summarized in *ibid.*, 610–11.

98. See *Roman Provincial Coinage* I, 620–23; *ibid.*, 588, for discussion of denominations; C.J. Howgego, *Greek Imperial Countermarks* (1985), 21–24; *idem*, “Coinage and Military Finance.”

99. See Butcher, “Coinage and Currency in Syria and Palestine,” 103f.; I. Carradice and M. Cowell, “The Minting of Roman Imperial Bronze Coins for Circulation in the East: Vespasian to Trajan,” *Numismatic Chronicle* 147 (1987): 26–50.

100. See K. Butcher, *Roman Provincial Coins* (1988), for a general survey of the topic, and “Coinage and Currency in Syria and Palestine,” more specifically on Syria. Howgego, in *Greek Imperial Countermarks*, 52–53, summarized information on the silver.

A.D. 60 the silver was principally tetradrachms minted on the Tyrian standard, mostly at Antioch.<sup>101</sup> They have a portrait of the reigning emperor as the obverse type and an eagle on the reverse with legends in Greek letters. In the third century in particular, smaller, sporadic issues of tetradrachms were made at other Syrian and Mesopotamian mints, generally distinguishable by minor additions to the reverse type. Finally a wide range of communities produced civic bronze coinages in a range of standards and denominations, generally assimilating to Italian denominations (*asses*) rather than Greek (*obols*) by quite early in the imperial period.<sup>102</sup> Obverse types generally were imperial portraits; reverses were diverse and often of local significance.

The first obvious question to ask of this evidence is whether specific types of coinage, “Roman” or “Greek” or silver or bronze were produced for, or required for, specific forms of economic activity; payment of soldiers by the state, payment of taxes by civilians, and local commercial use are examples. Denarii of the Rome mint are obvious candidates for army pay. Silver denarii were a standard medium of high-value payments, production was controlled by the central imperial authorities who paid the armies, and soldiers’ pay generally was reckoned in Roman denominations. Denarii certainly circulated in Syria in some quantity by the end of the first century A.D., and there is little difficulty assuming that the denarius was the main medium of army pay then. However, if (as asserted in *Roman Provincial Coinage I*) denarii did not circulate in Syria earlier in the first century, perhaps soldiers were paid in other, more “local” coin, such as Tyrian shekels or drachmas. Soldiers’ pay was reckoned in drachmas in Egypt, where the denarius did not circulate, and there troops were probably actually paid in the billion tetradrachms of Alexandria. However, if denarii were not the principal medium of army pay in the earlier first century, is it likely that there was a change and that they were

101. Before A.D. 60, there was a mixture of Tyrian silver shekels, Antiochene silver tetradrachms struck to a lighter standard, and civic issues of drachma coinages. After A.D. 60, the silver produced in Syria was almost entirely Antiochene silver tetradrachm issues struck on the Tyrian standard, with the Tyrian reverse type of an eagle. There seems to have been a deliberate and official attempt to standardize and centralize Syrian silver production at the mint of Antioch and to make its products as acceptable as the widely recognized Tyrian issues by adopting the latter’s weight standard and reverse type. On this, see *Roman Provincial Coinage I*, 12–13, 29, 585–87, 607, 610. For Flavian issues at Antioch and elsewhere, see R.G. McAlee, “Vespasian’s Syrian Provincial Coinage,” *American Journal of Numismatics* 7–8 (1995–96): 113–43.

102. See Howgego, *Greek Imperial Countermarks*, 54–60.

in the second century? Perhaps the Syrian garrison was always paid principally in tetradrachms.

It is also clear that Roman soldiers might draw some of their pay in bronze coin, more suited to lower-value transactions.<sup>103</sup> Howgego argues convincingly that the SC bronze coinage produced at Antioch in quantity from ca. 6–5 B.C. was first struck by imperial authorities for a military build up in a time of potential conflict with Persia, over the revolt of Tigranes. He suggests that it continued to be used as a medium for the payment of soldiers.<sup>104</sup> He argues that the SC series of coin was countermarked (that is, over stamped, perhaps to indicate official recognition of validity or denomination) extensively by many legions, which implies that they were used a great deal by legionaries. Both silver denarii and the “imperial” bronze of Antioch were (or in the case of the latter, probably were) produced by the state and perhaps represented a means of transmission of the state’s wealth. Their use as army pay is the most plausible explanation of their appearance in large numbers at a site like Dura-Europos, where denarii seem to have been the most common form of silver coinage throughout the second century A.D., despite the fact that civilian documents invariably show reckoning in tetradrachms minted at the Tyrian standard, probably into the third century.<sup>105</sup> The “imperial” bronze of Antioch also was common at Dura.<sup>106</sup> Certainly some of these bronze coins from Dura have legionary countermarks, indicating that they had passed through the army at some stage, and legionary countermarks are a rare phenomenon on finds from primary civilian sites, such as Antioch itself.<sup>107</sup>

Even coinage that was not used directly for army pay may have had some association with military expenditure. A link between large silver tetradrachm issues in Syria and elsewhere (such as Caesarea in Cappadocia) and major military campaigns has been noted by a number of scholars.<sup>108</sup>

103. The evidence is summarized in Howgego, *Greek Imperial Countermarks*, 20–21, and Crawford, “Finance, Coinage, and Money from the Severans to Constantine,” 564.

104. Howgego, *Greek Imperial Countermarks*, 21–23; “Coinage and Military Finance,” especially 12.

105. See D. Walker, *The Metrology of the Roman Silver Coinage*, 3 vols. (1976–78), 3:100; *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 9 n. 13.

106. See A.R. Bellinger, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*, Final Report VI: *The Coins* (1949) (hereafter cited as *Dura Final Report* 6), 73–77; the “Senatorial” issues are the SC series.

107. See Howgego, *Greek Imperial Countermarks*, 19.

108. Walker, *Metrology*, 3:112–14 (Nero), 115–17; *ibid.*, 2:82f., 111 (Vespasian, Trajan, Lucius Verus); Butcher, *Roman Provincial Coins*, 98 (Caracalla).

Even if it was not used for army pay, this silver in Greek denominations may have been produced for the army's economic transactions with provincial civilians to secure supplies for the wars.<sup>109</sup> It seems likely that the imperial administration controlled the production of much, if not all, of this drachma coinage, probably drawing on imperial revenues. Indeed, some silver issues nominally of Caesarea in Cappadocia appear to have been minted in Rome itself, a direct injection of imperial resources to eastern wars.<sup>110</sup>

The final group of coinages to be examined are the "civic" bronze issues. Certainly soldiers used such coins. Some were countermarked by legions, and some traveled routes that suggest transport by soldiers.<sup>111</sup> Callu suggested that civic bronze coins were produced specifically for military purposes at certain centers with military connections, such as Samosata, Zeugma, Cyrrhus, Carrhae, Edessa, Rhesaina, and Singara. Crawford claimed that civic coining was an imperial imposition to provide coin for troops, but Howgego's arguments that they were produced not primarily for military pay but also for local use seem most convincing. He notes that civic coinages were particularly numerous in the east in the Severan period, when state requirements for bronze coinage were low and imperial production of bronze in the west had almost ceased. Cities petitioned the emperor for permission to produce coins, which suggests that it was desirable, rather than an imperial imposition. Howgego indicates that there is little evidence that civic bronzes circulated particularly in areas of army activity, and he points out that military countermarking of civic bronze was very rare.<sup>112</sup>

Finally, there is the evidence of coin finds from military sites themselves. It is possible to show links between the movement of coins to such places as Dura-Europos and the presence of soldiers there, but at these joint civilian-military sites, there is always the possibility of civilian means of transmission, such as trade. Examining coin finds from a purely military site might give us a more specific idea of the coinage used by the army alone. Few such sites have been excavated, but one is the fort of Tell

109. See, e.g., A. Burnett, *Coinage in the Roman World* (1987), 44.

110. See K. Butcher and M. Ponting, "Production of the Roman Provincial Silver Coinage for Caesarea in Cappadocia under Vespasian, A.D. 69–70," *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 14 (1995): 63–77.

111. See Howgego, *Greek Imperial Countermarks*, 22, table 2; 25–26.

112. J.-P. Callu, *La Politique monétaire des empereurs romains de 238 à 311* (1969), 28; Crawford, "Finance, Coinage, and Money from the Severans to Constantine," 572–75; Howgego, *Greek Imperial Countermarks*, 25–28.

el Hajj, mentioned earlier. Few identifiable coins were found there, but among the forty datable to the first two centuries A.D. were two silver denarii of Octavian and Trajan, nine SC “imperial” bronze coins of Antioch from Claudius to Hadrian, three bronze *sestertii* of the mint of Rome, four civic bronze coins of Antioch (three Neronian), four coins from mints in Palestine, three Nabataean coins, and two coins from Caesarea in Cappadocia; the rest were single specimens from mints in Syria.<sup>113</sup> This is a very small sample, but it perhaps shows the importance of the SC bronzes in army pay. It is difficult to draw general conclusions on the basis of two denarii (as high value silver coins were less likely to be lost), but their presence and the absence of tetradrachms may tell us something about the composition of army pay at this time. In contrast, the few coins produced by Oates’ excavations at the fort sites at Ain Sinu in Mesopotamia, of the early third century A.D., were all from Mesopotamian civic mints, such as Rhesaina, Nisibis, and Edessa.<sup>114</sup>

Bellinger interpreted several hoards and other groups of coins from Dura-Europos deposited in the first half of the third century A.D. as accumulations of army pay. The earliest, deposited ca. A.D. 217/8, consisted of 370 denarii (most, of course, of the mint of Rome), 1 tridrachm and 31 tetradrachms (from a range of Syrian mints).<sup>115</sup> Later comes a hoard deposited ca. A.D. 255/6, where tetradrachms of Antioch predominate (487 of 504 tetradrachms were from the mint of Antioch), with a single (Severan) denarius and 282 *antoniniani* of the mints of Rome, Antioch and Emesa.<sup>116</sup> More or less contemporary with the second hoard were deposits of coins buried with the bodies of soldiers, 127 coins, all of them *antoniniani*.<sup>117</sup> Also deposited in the A.D. 250s were three hoards actually found buried within Roman barracks at Dura. These were composed entirely of bronze coins, mostly civic issues from Mesopotamian and Pontic mints, with fewer from Antioch.<sup>118</sup> It is difficult to use these as certain proof of the composition of army pay, as only the hoards from the barracks and the coins buried with soldiers have any direct archaeologi-

113. See Bridel et al., *Tell et Hajj in Syrien*, 60–64.

114. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 85, 88.

115. *Dura Final Report* 6, 167–69, hoards 3 and 4, with the observation (169) “There is no evidence that the owner was a soldier, though the coins were those in which the soldiers were paid.”

116. Ibid. 165–66, hoard 1, with the note (166) that “the collection is composed of military money.”

117. Ibid. 181, hoard 17; 187 (“Coins with Corpses”).

118. Ibid. 179–81, hoards 14–16.

cal connection with the army. Indeed, Bellinger identifies the first two hoards discussed above as military on the basis of their composition. But if he is correct in identifying them as soldiers' accumulations, one might point to the predominance of denarii in the earliest hoard and their replacement by *antoniniani* and tetradrachms in the later hoards and soldiers' burials. The numerous tetradrachms may indicate either their general importance in army pay at the time, or their particular importance at times of emergency and of large military mobilizations, both of which occurred in A.D. 255/6. The hoards from the barracks show that civic bronze coinages were used by soldiers, even if they were not a regular component of what they were paid.

Given how little we know about the nature of imperial taxation in Roman Syria, it is not surprising that we know little about the coin or other media in which it was paid. However, it seems likely that denarii were required. This is suggested by the Gospel of Matthew, in the passage describing the time when the Pharisees questioned Christ about the morality of paying taxes to the Roman authorities. It records that in response to Jesus' question ἐπιδείξατέ μοι τὸ νόμισμα τοῦ κήνσου [show me the coin of the *census*] (i.e., tax), the Pharisees handed him a denarius (δηνάριον) with the imperial portrait, provoking the well-known reply ἀπόδοτε οὖν τὰ Καίσαρος Καίσαρι [render unto Caesar what is Caesar's].<sup>119</sup> This suggests that taxes were valued and perhaps paid in denarii in Judaea at the time the account was set, or was written down. The tax law of Palmyra (A.D. 137) is a municipal tariff, which sets the value of taxes in denarii and *asses* and refers to a letter of Germanicus to a Roman official stating that taxes were to be paid in Roman denominations.<sup>120</sup> The tetradrachm coinages and, perhaps, locally produced bronze coinages could be exchanged directly for Roman denominations, so actual payment may not have been in Roman coin. However, forcing taxpayers to exchange local coins for denarii at a premium seems a likely source of profit for the Roman or civic government. If this was so of a municipal tax, it is all the more likely of an imperial tax.

In contrast, a document from the Babatha archive shows tax on date groves in Arabia in A.D. 127 collected mostly in kind, but with a fixed

119. Matthew 22:19–21. Handing over of a coin described as a denarius is more direct and concrete than expression of value in denarii. The date at which this was written is uncertain and need not refer to practice early in the first century A.D., when, as I noted earlier, denarii were rare in Syria.

120. *OGIS* II, 629, lines 153–57 (= *IGRR* III, 1056, col. IVa, lines 42–46).

cash sum also collected as “crown tax,” specified in coins called μελαίναι (blacks), perhaps preprovincial Nabataean issues.<sup>121</sup> The procedures and media in which taxes were paid perhaps were Nabataean in origin and hence not directly relevant to Syria in general, except in that the Romans may have continued local practices there too.

The cycling of coin between military and civilian populations may have been significant as Hopkins has suggested, but only in the context of a relatively closed system of monetary circulation within a single province or region, rather than within the empire as a whole as Hopkins claimed.<sup>122</sup> If army pay and taxation were both calculated in denarii by the late first century A.D., these would have been cycled between soldiers, the army as an institution, and the civilian body, who bought goods and services from the civilian population, who paid the same coin back to the provincial authorities, who used it to pay soldiers once more. Sporadic large-scale issues of tetradrachms, whether minted in Syria from silver under imperial control, or minted in Rome and sent to Syria, may have been an exceptional response to regional crises when additional troops were brought in from outside and needed to be supplied. If both the army and taxes were paid predominantly in “local” coin (tetradrachms and SC bronzes), this would produce an even more markedly regional, rather than empire-wide, circulation pattern. These tetradrachms and SC bronzes hardly moved outside the province, as one might expect of coins cycled between soldiers and civilians within the region. Undoubtedly the SC bronze was used in part to pay soldiers. Probably some of it was used by civilians for small tax payments requiring low-denomination coins, and it may have been cycled back into the economy by authorities, along with newly minted issues that replaced those that may have remained in the civilian economy or that may have gone out of circulation. This may have been true of the tetradrachms of Antioch too. “Civic” bronze issues of Syrian and Mesopotamian cities seem to have been minted at civic expense and produced mainly for local use, serving occasionally, but not primarily, as a means of exchange between soldiers and civilians.

121. *P.Yadin* 16. See also Cotton, “Rent or Receipt from Moaza,” 553, and “Land Tenure in the Documents from the Nabataean Kingdom and the Roman Province of Arabia”; Bowersock, “The Babatha Papyri, Masada and Rome,” 342.

122. Duncan-Jones (*Structure and Scale*, 39–42) suggests that coin movements within the empire tended to follow regional patterns and that coin populations tend to display regional, rather than empire-wide, characteristics.

## Tax, Wealth, and Trade

Other implications of Hopkins' model of the Roman economy in the Principate include growth of agricultural production and related growth in interregional trade due to the imposition of money taxes. Hopkins states that the imposition of cash taxes forced cultivators "to produce, and to sell, more food in order to pay taxes." He continues: "The impact was greatest in those regions in which simple cultivators had paid little or no tax in money before the Roman conquest. There cultivators were forced to produce and sell a surplus which they had not previously produced, or which they had previously consumed themselves." Hopkins suggests that some surplus was sold direct to tax-consuming provinces for cash, the rest to artisans within the province who produced goods for export to tax-consuming provinces. Hopkins proposes that both transactions gave rise to an expansion in interregional trade to roughly A.D. 200.<sup>123</sup>

As Hopkins himself might admit, Syria is one of the provinces where these propositions work least well, for reasons connected with its historical development and the fact that it was at the same time a wealthy tax-exporting province *and* a heavily garrisoned tax-importing province. The imposition of taxes, including money taxes, was nothing new in Syria.<sup>124</sup> Roman taxes on Syria may not have been any more burdensome than Seleucid taxes, and perhaps one exploiter was merely replaced by another, equally rapacious one. However, we have one anecdotal piece of evidence for high taxes in Syria and Judaea, the complaints of those provinces to Tiberius about their burdens in A.D. 17, recorded by Tacitus.<sup>125</sup> Duncan-Jones suggests that the Caesarian tax in kind imposed on Judaea may have been unusually high (20 percent) for a preindustrial society, and he concludes that taxes in cash imposed on Syria and Judaea may have been similar.<sup>126</sup> Also, the region (or at least its urban centers) had been monetized to a high degree in the Seleucid period, and, as Duncan-Jones states, "[i]t is unlikely that Syria was starved of specie."<sup>127</sup>

123. Hopkins, "Taxes and Trade," 101–2, 105–6.

124. A general survey of the evidence for Seleucid taxation is provided in Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (1953), 464–72.

125. Tac. *Ann.* 2.42: *et provinciae Suria atque Iudaea, fessae oneribus, diminutionem tributi orabant* [and the provinces of Syria and Judaea, worn out by their burdens, pleaded for a reduction of tribute].

126. Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale*, 189.

127. *Ibid.*, 43.

As the discussion of army pay and coinage suggests, it is probable that much of the wealth paid in tax remained within the province, recycled as army pay. Cultivators could sell surplus directly to the army within the province, and artisans could sell products, such as pottery, to soldiers based locally. For much of the Principate, the largest concentrations of soldiers were located near the large urban communities of northern Syria. Probably these cities were the focus of most of the wealth of the province. The civilian-military distinction in the region only became a geographical one (between a civilian core and a distinct “frontier zone”) after the second-century expansion into Mesopotamia, and even then large concentrations of troops remained behind the frontier zone in northern Syria. Also it is unlikely that a substantial increase in trade with other provinces was required to “buy back” whatever wealth *was* sent out of the province, as periodic injections of state wealth (denarii produced in Rome, tetradrachms and bronze coins produced in Rome for use in the east, and perhaps bullion for other tetradrachm issues) to support major wars on the eastern frontier would have corrected much of this imbalance.

Nevertheless, one might consider briefly the evidence for these features of the regional economy to see if there is any evidence for increased production (especially in agriculture) as a response to Roman rule in the Principate and whether there is evidence for an increase in trade with other provinces at the same time. Hopkins stresses the increased burden of the imposition of cash taxes by Roman authorities, so one might look at the evidence for the general level of prosperity of the cities of the region at this period, since an increased tax burden perhaps meant less surplus for such activities as public building.

The evidence for the scale of agricultural production and of trade in Syria is problematic. Excavation of rural sites and rural survey is important to any archaeological study of changes in agriculture, but relatively little of either form of fieldwork has been done in Syria, and even less has been published in full. Often the survey data that has been produced is not particularly helpful, because of a focus on substantial tell sites at the expense of smaller rural sites, and because of problems of dating due to poor local pottery sequences.<sup>128</sup> As evidence of increase in production, one might look for expansion into marginal agricultural land and specialized production of cash crops (such as wine and olive oil) for the market.

128. More useful data are emerging from a variety of recent survey projects in the region.

One older survey that provides some useful information is Braidwood's work in the plain east of Antioch.<sup>129</sup> While focusing on tell sites, he examined small sites too, and he provided a chronology based on the ceramic sequence from the excavation of a multiperiod tell site, Tell-al Judaidah. His chronological divisions included (I) early Christian (ca. A.D. 350–600), (II) Roman provincial (ca. 64 B.C.–A.D. 350; identified by late Hellenistic to Roman red-slipped wares, such as Eastern Sigillata A), and (III) late Hellenic to Hellenistic (ca. 500 B.C.–ca. 64 B.C.). Of 178 sites recorded, the majority include both periods II and III, and only 9 conclusively seem to start in period II, when one might expect the Roman presence to make an impact. There is a problem of distinguishing the later part of period III from early period II, but in the sites studied, there was some continuity through the Hellenistic and early Roman periods.<sup>130</sup> This is in sharp contrast to the very small number of sites with evidence for period I (late Roman) occupation.

Tchalenko's survey work in the limestone massif to the east of Antioch is another older survey of value. He examined only surface remains and relied primarily on construction techniques and inscriptions for his chronology. In his conclusions, he presents three main phases of occupation in the area. The first is Hellenistic, made up of relatively modest peasant villages ranged along the edges of the arable land on and around the plateau.<sup>131</sup> In the second phase, larger and more elaborate farm residences termed "villas" became a significant form of settlement, which Tchalenko takes to indicate exploitation of land by larger proprietors. This pattern was typical of the second to fourth centuries A.D.<sup>132</sup> The third phase lasted from the fourth to the sixth century, with very dense occupation of the plateau by quite large and architecturally elaborate villages of what Tchalenko takes to have been independent peasants, together with agricultural and commercial centers apparently emphasizing olive oil processing.<sup>133</sup> Tchalenko suggests that the mixed agricultural regimes of the Hellenistic villages was replaced by Roman monoculture of olive oil production for export in his second phase, in the first centuries A.D.<sup>134</sup>

In fact, there is little reason to suppose the development of large-scale

129. R.J. Braidwood, *Mounds in the Plain of Antioch* (1937).

130. Braidwood's distribution map (*ibid.*, 47) combines sites of periods II and III because most sites appeared to have been continuously occupied throughout.

131. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 1:379.

132. *Ibid.*, 381–82.

133. *Ibid.*, 385–87.

134. *Ibid.*, 399f.

monoculture in olive oil for export in the early Roman period. Tchalenko's date for the development of villas seems reasonable, but his assumptions concerning their agricultural regimes seem less certain. There is some evidence to support the idea of an introduction or growth of olive oil production at that time, but only as part of a mixed regime dominated by arable cultivation.<sup>135</sup> For example, at the site of Bamuqqa a villa with an oil press was constructed in the first century A.D. and developed into a larger village in the fourth to sixth centuries.<sup>136</sup> The villa produced evidence for only one press, and the extent of arable land around it suggests that olive oil was only one component of its production.<sup>137</sup> No doubt, olive oil was produced in greater quantity in the Roman period than before, and some of the oil may have constituted a cash crop, traded for money. However, there is no evidence for export on a large scale. The oil may have been sold to cities of north Syria or to the army, but there is no indication of the large-scale expansion of production for overseas trade that Hopkins' economic model suggests. Certainly no specific amphora forms for the transport of Syrian oil at this period have been recognized. Tchalenko suggested that the third phase of settlement in the massif focused more on olive oil production, with expansion into marginal land and large-scale processing of oil. The implications of this are discussed in chapter 6.

George Tate's recent restudy of this evidence provides interesting supplementary and cautionary observations on Tchalenko's broad schemes of rural life in the limestone massif. Tate plays down Tchalenko's concept of olive monoculture in favor of more varied and mixed agricultural regimes, and he is reluctant to accept Tchalenko's notion of development of a qualitatively different class of settlement (the "villas") and of a distinctive class of large proprietors in the second to fourth centuries A.D. He stresses instead homogeneity of architecture in the region (some farms were bigger than others, but this is a quantitative distinction, not a qualitative one) and the absence of significant evidence for the existence of large proprietors, whom Tchalenko claimed were Roman officials and veterans.

Tate's chronology is more refined and detailed than Tchalenko's. In

135. The mixed nature of the agricultural regime of the region is an important theme of a recent restudy of the evidence from the region, G. Tate's *Les Campagnes de la Syrie du nord du IIe au VIIe siècle* (1992). This study is discussed in more detail shortly and in the context of the later imperial economy.

136. See Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 2: pls. XCIV, XCV.

137. See *ibid.*, pl. XCII.

general terms, he agrees with Tchalenko's picture of gradually increased settlement in the Principate and more dramatic growth from the fourth century. However, he draws attention to apparent stagnation ca. A.D. 250–320.<sup>138</sup> This he attributes to the impact of plague in the third century, specifically rejecting war as a cause. As Tate indicates, the focus of the wars of the third century was on the cities of northern Syria, and the direct impact of warfare on the massif may have been quite limited. However, Tate does not consider the indirect effect of war on the regional economy, including government exactions to support wars elsewhere in the province. If these acted as exploitative demands for services and goods rather than as stimuli for production for sale to the army, we might expect that these exactions curtailed the ability of the population to accumulate surplus and hence their ability to build. It is clear that pressures generated by army supply existed by the A.D. 230s. Inscriptions from Cilicia discussed earlier (AE 1972, 626–28) are proof of that and of how far afield government demands were felt. It would not be surprising if such demands also had a depressing effect on building in the limestone massif by ca. A.D. 250. The frontier was more stable from A.D. 298 (after Galerius' campaigns), so a revival of new construction in the villages ca. A.D. 320 might be expected, as their inhabitants had the opportunity to accumulate surplus for a few decades without excessive state demands. This different (not plague-related) reading of Tate's evidence seems coherent and sensible and emphasizes the role of the army as an exploiter and depressor of the regional economy rather than a stimulator of growth.

Survey in the Euphrates valley between Zeugma (Belkis/Birecik) and Europos (Carchemish/Jerablus) shows a very similar pattern, with a high density of sites from the Hellenistic to early Byzantine periods, peaking in the late Roman to early Byzantine periods (twenty-five sites in the former period, forty-two in the latter), with some discontinuity in the occupation of sites between the two periods. Fieldwork showed that the countryside in the immediate vicinity of Zeugma was particularly intensively exploited, although there is no evidence that the exploitation related to the establishment of the Roman legionary fortress rather than to the influence of the city.<sup>139</sup>

138. Tate, *Campaignes*, 300–301.

139. G. Algaze et al., "The Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project: A Preliminary Report of the 1989–1990 Seasons," *Anatolica* 17 (1991): 205–8; G. Algaze, R. Breuninger, and J. Knudstad, "The Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project: Final Report of the Birecik and Carchemish Dam Survey Areas," *Anatolica* 20 (1994): 19–22.

The final survey to be examined is a recent one conducted in the area southeast of the Euphrates to the southwest of the site of the legionary fortress of Samosata.<sup>140</sup> This area lay within the kingdom of Osroene for the first two centuries A.D., and we might not expect to see the impact of Roman taxation until the early third century. In fact, the survey indicates general expansion of settlement starting in the Hellenistic period and peaking in the late Roman and early Byzantine periods. Neither the arrival of the Roman army at Samosata nor the annexation of the kingdom seems to have had any visible impact on rural settlement, although some sites occupied in the early third century A.D. had brittle cookware like that at Ain Sinu.<sup>141</sup>

Thus there is little evidence from field survey in Syria and Mesopotamia for agricultural expansion and export of surplus resulting from imposition of money taxation by the Romans. However, the archaeological evidence is too limited to provide conclusive proof of the absence of such change. Scattered literacy and documentary evidence refers to agricultural produce from Syria and Mesopotamia and emphasizes the fertility of the Tigris and Euphrates valleys.<sup>142</sup> However, none provides direct evidence for export of surplus, except of wine, as will be discussed shortly.

Undoubtedly, stock raising played an important role in the economy of the region, especially in agriculturally marginal areas. Wool and leather might have been valuable raw materials for the production of goods by artisans. Unfortunately, this is one of the most difficult forms of economic activity to detect archaeologically, and there is no satisfactory detailed evidence regarding livestock raising from the Principate. The interrelationship of nomadic pastoralists and settled agriculturalists on the eastern frontier has been discussed at some length in recent scholarship, particularly with regard to Roman Arabia. The general debate is also relevant to semiarid areas within the area of this study, both in the south of Syria and in Mesopotamia. For, as Millar states, the valleys of such rivers as the Euphrates, Tigris, and Khabur form strips of cultivable land with steppe on either side, and thus their inhabitants interacted with nomadic populations on a regular basis.<sup>143</sup>

140. Wilkinson, *Town and Country in Southeastern Anatolia*.

141. See *ibid.*, 3, 114–17.

142. See F.H. Heichelheim "Roman Syria," in *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, ed. T. Frank, 6 vols. (1933–1940), 4:127–39.

143. Millar, *The Roman Near East*, 439.

Debates over the relationship between nomads and sedentists, primarily based on evidence from Roman Arabia, have emphasized, on the one hand, hostility (Parker) and, on the other, mutualism (Banning).<sup>144</sup> Mayer-son has tried to reconcile the two views by differentiating between macro-relationships, such as those illustrated by historical sources concerning conflict between Roman authorities and nomads, and microrelationships, which might have included local mutualism illustrated by detailed archaeological evidence, such as Banning's.<sup>145</sup> This approach seems quite useful, and perhaps the different forms of evidence answer different questions, political and economic. However, Parker's suggestion that mutualism may have functioned best when a strong central power, such as Rome, was able to police the relationship is also convincing.

Within the province of Syria itself, most of this discussion has centered on the nomads in the Hauran. French scholars working in this area emphasize mutualism as a model of the interrelationships between nomads and agriculturalists in the region, given the proximity of ecological zones suited to pastoralism and agriculture and given the fact that the sanctuaries at Seeia, in a settled zone, seem to have been the destination of regular pilgrimages by nomads.<sup>146</sup> As I noted in chapter 3, there may

144. E.B. Banning, "Peasants, Pastoralists, and *Pax Romana*: Mutualism in the Southern Highlands of Jordan," *BASOR* 261 (1986): 25–50; idem, "*De Bello Paceque*: A Reply to Parker," *BASOR* 265 (1987): 52–54; S.T. Parker, "Peasants, Pastoralists, and *Pax Romana*: A Different View," *BASOR* 265 (1987): 35–51.

145. P. Mayer-son, "Saracens and Romans: Micro-Macro Relationships," *BASOR* 274 (1989): 71–79. A similar approach has been taken with some success in Gideon Avni's study of archaeological evidence from the Negev, *Nomads, Farmers, and Town Dwellers: Pastoralist-Sedentist Interaction in the Negev Highlands, Sixth–Eighth Centuries C.E.* (1996). For Banning, see n. 144.

146. Much of Dentzer, *Hauran* part 1, deals with these issues, but in particular see Dentzer's general conclusions at 400–406. A famous fragmentary Greek inscription from Seeia (Si') dating to shortly before the Roman annexation of the area (*IGRR* III, 1223 = *OGIS* II, 424, to be taken with *Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria*, div. III, sec. A, pt. 6, (ed. E. Littmann and D. Magie Jr. [1916], 359–64, no. 766) has been interpreted as an injunction to nomads to settle down in houses and abandon their savage way of life or, alternatively, as an injunction to hunt down bandits. For the sanctuary and site of Seeia, see *Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria*, div. II, sec. A, pt. 6, ed. H.C. Butler (1916) (on the sanctuary); *Publications of the Princeton University Expeditions to Syria*, div. IV, sec. A, ed. E. Littmann (1914), no. 100 (the Nabataean dedication inscription of the sanctuary of Baalshamin). For the recent French excavations at Si', see Dentzer, *Hauran*, pt. 1, passim; J.-M. and J. Dentzer, "Les Fouilles de Si' et la Phase Hellénistique en Syrie du Sud," *CRAI* (1981): 78–102 (including a reference to the pilgrimage, at 100–101); J.-M. Dentzer et al., "Six campagnes de fouilles à Si'," *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 2 (1985): 65–83.

have been a Roman military presence at Seeia, and the control of nomads and oversight of their interaction with sedentists may have been among its main functions.

Heichelheim collected the literary and documentary evidence for stock rearing in the region as a whole, which does little more than indicate the (not unexpected) range of animals raised.<sup>147</sup> Perhaps more settled conditions in Roman Syria improved the efficiency of stock raising or at least the efficiency of the control and exploitation of pastoralists by civic or imperial authorities, but the Roman army does not seem to have moved out into the desert fringes of the province in strength until well into the second century A.D.

One can list some goods produced by Syrian artisans.<sup>148</sup> Many of them are perishable commodities, such as textiles, so there is little physical evidence for the trade and traders from Roman Syria and Phoenicia attested in scattered sources.<sup>149</sup> It is clear that some of these perishable goods were extremely valuable. Diocletian's *Edictum de Pretiis* records that a pound of white silk cost 12,000 denarii and that a pound of purple dyed silk cost 150,000 denarii at a time when a farm laborer nominally earned 25 denarii per day. Silk was imported from the east and worked in Syria, and purple dye was produced from *murex* at Tyre.<sup>150</sup> Leaving aside private profits, the related income to imperial and municipal governments in customs dues alone may have been substantial. However, the importance of such goods in the regional economy as a whole is unclear.

Syro-Palestine was an important center for glass production—the place where glassblowing developed, according to Strabo and the Elder Pliny, who mention Sidon and Ptolemais.<sup>151</sup> Vessels have been found with

147. Heichelheim in Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, 4 (1938): 152–56.

148. *Ibid.*, 4:189–201.

149. H.W. Pleket's "Urban Elites and Business in the Greek Part of the Roman Empire," in *Trade in the Ancient Economy*, ed. P. Garnsey, K. Hopkins, and C.R. Whittaker (1983), 131–44, provides a useful discussion of the social and political status of traders in Greek cities, including those of Syria. G.W. Bowersock's "Social and Economic History of Syria under the Roman Empire," in *Archéologie et histoire de la Syrie*, vol. 2, *La Syrie de l'époque achéménide à l'avènement de l'Islam*, ed. J.-M. Dentzer and W. Orthmann (1989), 63–80, at 75–77, summarizes some of the evidence for Syrian traders.

150. See Strabo 16.2.23.

151. Pliny *NH* 36.191–93 discusses early glass production from sand on the beach near Ptolemais and the former (*quondam*) importance of Sidon for glass production; Strabo 16.2.25 discusses the quality of the sand on the beach between Ptolemais and Tyre and its use for glass production at Sidon.

stamps indicating the producer's origin as Sidon.<sup>152</sup> But frustratingly little is known about the nature and scale of production and export, and scholarship is speculative and vague. Little has been done to test supposed Syro-Palestinian origins of some vessel forms. One of the better summaries of the archaeological evidence is that of Grosse, who suggested that the quantity and homogeneity of glass vessels found in excavation at Tel Anafa in the Upper Galilee indicates Syro-Palestinian production of certain classes of cast bowls.<sup>153</sup> The first two groups, grooved bowls and vertically fluted bowls, were Hellenistic, with production probably from the first half of the second century B.C. to the second half of the first century B.C. Export was fairly widespread, with examples known from Italy as well as Greece and the Aegean and, of course, Syro-Palestine. The third and fourth groups, ribbed bowls and linear-cut bowls, probably were produced from about 50 B.C. until just after the reign of Augustus (for the ribbed bowls). They show a similar distribution in the east, but many have also been found further north and west than the Hellenistic groups, as far as Britain and the Rhine frontier. However, it is clear that some vessels in these forms were produced in Italy, for example, after their emergence in the east, and not enough work has been done to separate Syro-Palestinian products from imitations to assess changes in the volume of trade over time.

One export that was not perishable was pottery, and it is possible to study production and export of pottery per se and as a proxy for more valuable perishable goods, such as textiles and agricultural produce. Such studies have been successful in the western part of the Roman empire but are more difficult in the east, due to the quality and scale of fieldwork and publication and to a tradition of pottery studies that has emphasized chronology over quantification and characterization.

Perhaps the most promising body of pottery for future study is the red-slipped fineware known as Eastern Sigillata A (ESA).<sup>154</sup> This is found in

152. However, these vessels may have been produced at "branch factories" in Italy. Cf. D.B. Harden, *Glass of the Caesars* (1987), 88–91.

153. D. Grose, "The Syro-Palestinian Glass Industry in the Later Hellenistic Period," *Muse* 13 (1979): 54–65. See also, more generally, Toledo Museum of Art, *Early Ancient Glass* (1989), 193–197, 241–47.

154. The pottery was first given this name by J.W. Crowfoot in her study of it in K. Kenyon, ed., *Samaria-Sebaste*, no. 3, *The Objects* (1957). A useful survey of Eastern Sigillata A is that of J.W. Hayes in the *Enciclopedia dell'arte antica, atlante delle forme ceramiche*, vol. 2 (1985), 9–48, although his dates for many of the forms do not take account of the most recent evidence.

quantity on sites in western Syria, and one of the earliest studies of ESA was Waagé's publication of "Pergamene" ware from Antioch.<sup>155</sup> The concentration of finds in Syro-Palestine suggests an origin in that region, perhaps in Roman Syria.<sup>156</sup> Moreover, ESA has a wide distribution throughout the eastern Mediterranean and beyond—to Pompeii, for example—which indicates routes used to ship other goods from Syria. Such studies are complicated by disagreements over the chronology of ESA, but production certainly started before Roman occupation of Syria. There are too few quantified studies of eastern Mediterranean finewares at present to relate ESA production to wider issues of the economy, such as the development of tax-stimulated trade, with any reliability. One study in which ESA has been quantified and evaluated with regard to long-distance trade is Kenrick's in his publication of finewares from Berenice-Benghazi in Libya.<sup>157</sup> Most ESA from that site is attributed to the second half of the first century B.C. and to the first century A.D. (the first 150 years of Roman rule in Syria), when imports of western Campanian wares ceased to arrive there. Kenrick relates the change in imports to disruption of western shipping caused by pirates before their defeat by Pompey in 67 B.C., but other explanations regarding the changing volume of production and export of ESA might be relevant too. It may be possible to draw more valid conclusions as further such studies are done and as information regarding chronology and provenience becomes more reliable.

Another issue relating to pottery and Syrian trade involves the absence of a class of pottery that we might expect to find. In his description of Syria, Strabo refers to the territory of Laodicea as being rich in wine (πολύοινον), describes the extent of cultivation of the vine there, and states that it provides the majority of the wine sent to the people of Alexandria, apparently at the time he was writing, during the reign of Augustus.<sup>158</sup> The author of the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* indicates that Laodicean wine was exported to the Red Sea area.<sup>159</sup> There is no known container for the export of this wine, which may be because the appropri-

155. *Antioch on the Orontes*, vol. 4, pt. 1, *Ceramics and Islamic Coins*, ed. F.O. Waagé (1948).

156. For the production place of ESA, see Slane, "The Fine Wares," 227.

157. P.M. Kenrick, *Excavations at Sidi Khrebish, Benghazi (Berenice)*, vol. 3, pt. 1, *The Fine Pottery* (1985). However, note the reservations concerning chronology expressed by K.W. Slane in her review in *AJA* 96 (1992): 191–92.

158. Strabo 16.2.9.

159. *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ed. Casson), 6: καὶ οἶνος Λαδικηνὸς καὶ Ἰταλικὸς οὐ πολὺς.

ate amphora form has not been recognized as yet (a very common problem in the eastern Mediterranean) or because it was shipped in a perishable container, such as a barrel.

The huge quantities of Rhodian amphora handles found in Alexandria and the relatively few references to trade with Rhodes in Ptolemaic papyri have led Fraser to come up with the ingenious theory that Laodicaean wine was carried in Rhodian amphorae, perhaps from as early as the second century B.C. He cites modern shipments of empty jars from Rhodes to Beirut in support of his hypothesis.<sup>160</sup> This is an interesting theory, but it is more likely that the container for Laodicaean wine merely remains unrecognized. In addition to the problems of identifying its containers, we do not know enough about the beginning of the export of Laodicaean wine to claim that it was stimulated by Roman taxation, although it certainly may have been an important export from early Roman Syria.

Recent systematic excavations in Beirut may shed more light on the general issue of export of wine and oil from Syria. A preliminary report of the pottery from the BEY 006 site refers to the development in the early Roman period of a "new local amphora tradition . . . with vessels with triangular sectioned rims and ribbed bodies with a conical base in a brown and then black sandy fabric."<sup>161</sup> Some examples from the first century A.D. were inscribed *BER COL*. This amphora production may specifically relate to new patterns of exploitation in the territory of Berytus after the foundation of the *colonia*, or perhaps it relates to a more general phenomenon connected with such factors as changing tax burdens. Undoubtedly, there is much more to learn about Syrian amphora production. Empereur and Picon have presented further evidence that a range of otherwise unattributed amphoras were produced in Syria and Cilicia in the Principate, including two pseudo-Coan forms and the so-called carrot amphora (Peacock and Williams class 12).<sup>162</sup>

Thus no conclusive archaeological data supports an increase in trade between Roman Syria and other provinces of the empire stimulated by

160. P. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (1972), 167–68.

161. J. Evans, "Islamic and Roman Pottery: Preliminary Report," 1995. [http://www.aub.lb/aub-online/faculties/arts\\_and\\_sciences/archaeology/pottery.html](http://www.aub.lb/aub-online/faculties/arts_and_sciences/archaeology/pottery.html) (1999).

162. Peacock and Williams, *Amphorae and the Roman Economy*, 109–10, class 12; J.-Y. Empereur and M. Picon, "Les Régions de production d'amphores impériales en Méditerranée orientale," in *Amphores romaines et histoire économique, dix ans de recherche* (1989), 225–33.

imposition of cash taxes. However, the inadequate and difficult nature of the evidence does not really disprove such an increase either. The evidence suggests some general trends, such as increases in rural settlement and the production and export of ESA, that began in the Hellenistic period and continued and perhaps intensified in the early Roman period. This may have been due to more stable conditions within Syria and the eastern Mediterranean as a whole. Rural evidence from the very end of the Principate, the stagnation in building in the second half of the third century A.D. indicated by Tate's study of the limestone massif, suggests a link between military activity and economic depression. The primary economic impact of such wars appears to have been direct exploitation rather than stimulation of production, and the army and warfare were parasitic on the civilian economy.

General indices for provincial prosperity are hard to find. Duncan-Jones examined general trends in public building throughout the Roman empire by examining the number of known building inscriptions over time, one possible index of local wealth or imperial policy.<sup>163</sup> His evidence for Syria shows limited building up to the reign of Hadrian, then a marked increase and continuity at the new level throughout the second century A.D. While greater prosperity from the Hadrianic period might explain this pattern, there are so many issues relating to survival of evidence and the attitudes of emperors and other benefactors that it is not very useful for our purposes. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the cities of Syria were not crippled by Roman taxation. Well-dated excavated evidence for the early Roman period is limited, but the monumental *cardo maximus* of Apamea, laid out in about the first mid–first century A.D., implies major reorganization and rebuilding;<sup>164</sup> part of the same street was monumentalized with a colonnade in the second century. Antioch received many public buildings throughout the first centuries of Roman rule, although many were donated by outsiders, such as emperors and Herod Agrippa.<sup>165</sup> At best this may tell us about the economic condition of the curial classes, not about the peasants who provided the surplus that produced wealth. However, one gets a general impression that Syria was a relatively wealthy province through the first centuries of the Principate.

163. Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale*, 59–67.

164. See Mertens, "Sondages dans la grande colonnade et sur l'enceinte," 67.

165. Much of it is only known from literary evidence. See G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest* (1961), passim.

### Conclusions

Hopkins' model of the Roman economy proved a useful basis for analysis of the economy of Syria, although the evidence examined suggests that the economy there did not conform to his model in all respects. The army was a key element in the provincial economy through its position in a chain of cash taxation, army pay, and army spending. This economic network appears to have been regional in scope, because of the combination of a wealthy civilian sector and a large army presence in the same province, but tied into the empire as a whole by periodic injections of wealth from the central government, associated with reinforcement of the garrison for major wars on the eastern frontier. Undoubtedly, trade between Syria and the rest of the empire existed, but it is unlikely that it was stimulated by cash taxation or was structurally necessary to the functioning of the economy in the way that Hopkins' model suggests.



## CHAPTER 6

# Economic Change and the Roman Army in the Later Empire

The third century saw profound changes to all components of the Roman economy. The frontier crises and civil wars of the third century led to particularly large-scale debasement of the government-produced, nominally silver denarii and *antoniniani*. With the collapse of the imperial monetary system, there was an increased emphasis on the exaction of taxes and payment of officials and soldiers in kind.

This has obvious implications for the interrelationship of important elements of the economy. Hopkins has summarized some consequences.<sup>1</sup> The move away from easily portable coin to bulky supplies in kind as the primary form of the exchange between civilians, administration, and army regionalized the economy to a greater degree, as such supplies were redistributed on a local basis to avoid excessive transport. What was (according to Hopkins) an empire-wide unified economy in the Principate ceased to exist. Hopkins also suggests that a decrease in the need for cash led to a decrease in the production of artisan goods and in interregional trade. Analysis of the later imperial economy in Syria and Mesopotamia can be conducted in the same way as that of the Principate, by examining the key elements of the economy (tax, army pay, money, production, and trade) and examining how changes in each of these categories affected their interrelationships.

### Taxation in Late Imperial Syria and Mesopotamia

What one might characterize as the late imperial tax system was formalized and regularized principally by Diocletian but composed of elements that had origins in the Principate. The key feature was the annual *indictio* of tax levied in kind on the rural population, agricultural land, and

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1. Hopkins, "Taxes and Trade," 123–24.

capital, such as livestock. For assessment, people and property were divided up into accounting units. At least in conception, the *caput* was the basic unit of poll tax, and the *iugum* was the unit for land tax. But in most areas of the empire, the two were equated, and one was used in each province (*iugum* in Syria) perhaps as early as the reign of Diocletian.<sup>2</sup> Each administrative area of the empire was divided up into a number of accounting units based on taxable value. A specific illustration of how this worked from Syria or Mesopotamia is to be found in the “Syro-Roman Law Book” mentioned in chapter 5.<sup>3</sup> This states that Diocletian defined the *iugum* (the accounting unit) as 5 *iugera* (units of area) of vineyard, 20 *iugera* of arable land, 220 “trunks” of old olive trees, 450 “trunks” of mountain olive trees, or specified larger tracts of pasture land defined by quality. Hence the *iugum* was a unit of taxable value, not, for example, a fixed unit of area. Everything taxable could be defined either as a fraction or multiple of a *iugum*, and whole territories or provinces could be expressed as a number of *iuga* by totaling the tax value of the assets within. Hence the territory of Cyrrhus in Syria in the mid-fifth century consisted of about sixty thousand *iuga*, of which ten thousand were imperial property.<sup>4</sup>

The amount of tax paid each year per *iugum* was not fixed. The central administration estimated its requirements for each year on the basis that officials and soldiers were paid an allowance in kind of a fixed quantity or an exact multiple of that quantity. The total requirement was divided by the total number of *iuga* in the empire, which gave the amount of tax in kind that had to be exacted from each *iugum* that year.<sup>5</sup> Hence rates of tax changed from year to year depending on the requirements of

2. See *LRE* 1: 453–54. See also Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale*, 201–3; *ibid.*, 210, on the definition of the *iugum* in Syria.

3. The law book is translated from Syriac into Latin in *FIRA*<sup>2</sup> II, 751–98. The land assessment is detailed in *ibid.*, chap. 122, on pp. 796f. The references to *perticae* in the translation are erroneous; see Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale*, 203 n. 14.

4. These figures come from two letters of Theodoret: see Théodoret de Cyr, *Correspondance*, vol. 2, *Epist. Sirm.* 1–95, ed. and trans. Y. Azéma (1964), *Ep.* 42, 47. In the latter, he refers to “Cyrrhus paying tax on over 62,000 *iuga*.” In the former, he states “this measure of land contains 50,000 ‘free’ *iuga* and another 10,000 besides these subject to tax/ the *fiscus*.” Azéma translates this to mean that fifty thousand *iuga* were free of tax. Jones (*LRE* 1: 416) reads it as a contrast between ten thousand *iuga* of property held as imperial estate and fifty thousand *iuga* held by landowners, “free” in the sense of not belonging to the emperor. The latter is more convincing and gives a rough correspondence with the figure of sixty-two thousand taxable units in *Ep.* 47.

5. See *LRE* 1: 449.

the state. Annual impositions were known as *indictiones*, and most Christian inscriptions of Syria were dated by the indiction when they were set up. Tax was assessed and collected in kind, but illegal commutation to cash (apparently to the advantage of officials rather than taxpayers) seems to have been a regular problem.<sup>6</sup> Legal commutation seems to have become a regular practice in the west before the end of the fourth century, but only later in the eastern half of the empire.

Collection of produce from peasants who paid taxes was, in theory at least, a liturgy carried out by the curial class of the city in whose territory the land lay.<sup>7</sup> A speech of Libanius records the implications of this for the curial class of Antioch.<sup>8</sup> He tells how civic tax collectors were chased away from the villages by soldiers who were paid by the villagers for protection. Unable to exact the taxes from the rural population, the *curiales* had to sell their property to pay the tax themselves, or else they faced a flogging at the hands of the Roman authorities. While tax collection was supposed to be a civilian activity, legal sources record abuses, such as direct collection by soldiers, as discussed in chapter 3. The produce collected was passed on to imperial civilian authorities and hence to soldiers and officials as *annona*.

While *indictiones* of tax in kind were the most important element of late Roman taxation, other taxes were levied too, most of them in gold coin (*solidi*) or bullion. These included *aurum coronarium* (crown gold, mentioned in chapter 5) levied on special occasions, such as an emperor's accession. According to Libanius, on the accession of Julian some cities offered one to two thousand *solidi* (στατήρες) of *aurum coronarium*, but he refused to accept more than seventy.<sup>9</sup> *Aurum tironicum* was another payment of gold, in lieu of recruits for the army.<sup>10</sup> *Collatio lustralis* (χρυσάργυρον) was a tax on *negotiatores*, individuals who lived by buying and selling or charging a fee, paid every four or five years as a fixed sum in gold. Edessa paid 140 pounds (*librae*, or λίτραι transliterated into Syriac) of gold bullion as *collatio lustralis* until A.D. 497/8, when Anastasius abolished the tax.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to this direct tax on traders, merchants, and others, the

6. See *C.Th.* 11.2.4 (A.D. 384; on the collection of taxes in kind), 7.4.1 (A.D. 325), 9.2.4–5 (A.D. 384, 385, 389; on abuses).

7. See *LRE* 1: 456.

8. Libanius *Or.* 47.7–10.

9. See *LRE* 1: 430; Libanius *Or.* 18.193.

10. See *LRE* 1: 432.

11. See *ibid.*, 1: 431–32; Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* (ed. Wright), 31.

indirect customs dues (*portoria*) known in the Principate continued to exist.<sup>12</sup> Import taxes called *octavae*, *octavarii*, or ὀκταβάριοι (eighths, 12.5 percent) are known, although it is not always clear whether they were imperial or municipal. Jones suggests that some were imperial, but de Laet considers it unlikely that the rate of imperial imposts dropped to half the rate levied in the Principate. However, in at least one case it is clear that tax at this rate was levied on goods coming from outside the empire.<sup>13</sup> Regarding a treaty between the Romans and Persians in A.D. 561/2, Meander Protector mentions δεκατευτήρια, stations for tithe collection, as locations specified for the passage of Roman and Persian merchants.<sup>14</sup> This suggests that a 10 percent tax on passing merchandise was in force at this time.

The locations of customs collection points in the late empire are recorded in the context of treaties between Romans and Persians, specifying routes by which merchants and others should pass between empires. According to Petrus Patricius, in the treaty of A.D. 297 Diocletian and Galerius insisted that Nisibis should be the place for “interactions” (συναλλαγμάτων) between Romans and Persians, presumably including diplomatic contacts, general movement between empires, and trade.<sup>15</sup> An imperial rescript of A.D. 408/9 states that no Roman subject should set out to buy or sell either “beyond” or, perhaps, “except by way of” (*ultra*) Nisibis, Callinicum, or Artaxata.<sup>16</sup> Whatever the exact meaning of this passage, it is clear that these cities were regarded as the limit of the empire for trade purposes. Nisibis replaced the customs post at Zeugma on the route through northern Mesopotamia, and Callinicum replaced the customs station at Dura-Europos on the Euphrates valley route. Artaxata was far to the north, in Armenia. Defining these limits was a security measure to control the movement of people, but restricting trade to a few crossing places simplified tax collection too. The collection points of the late empire were fortress cities, so the link between soldiers and imperial *portoria* seen in the Principate applies to the later empire too. A preference for centralization is also shown by the existence of a *comes commercium per Orientem et Aegyptum* in the *Notitia Dignitatum*.<sup>17</sup>

12. De Laet, in *Portorium*, 453–82, gives the general evidence for the late empire.

13. *LRE* 1: 429; de Laet, *Portorium*, 466 n. 1; *C.Th.* 4.13.8 (A.D. 381).

14. Menander Protector, frag. 6.1, lines 323–26 Blockley (= *FHG* IV, p. 212 [ed. Müller]).

15. Petrus Patricius, *FHG* IV, p. 189 (ed. Müller).

16. *CJ* 4.63.4 (A.D. 408/9).

17. *Notitia Dignitatum*, *Or.* 13.6–9.

In addition to dues collected on the imperial frontier, the central government also collected a proportion of municipal taxes on goods imported and exported. A fifth-century inscription from Beirut shows two separate tariffs being collected on the same goods by two collectors, a ταμίης (treasurer), whom the editor, Mouterde, takes to be a civil official, and a ἑκατοστάρχης (collector of a hundredth part), whom he takes to be an imperial agent.<sup>18</sup> A late tariff is recorded in an inscription from Cilicia published by Dagron and Feissel.<sup>19</sup> The editors date it to the fifth or sixth century on palaeographic grounds. It is not clear from the content whether it was a municipal tariff on local trade or an internal imperial one. The editors suggest the latter, noting that the rough methods of assessing the value of goods recorded were more suited to large consignments than to taxing the produce of local peasants. Also, they suggest that peasants were more likely to pay local tariffs in kind than in cash as specified in the inscription. In response, Potter cites the Tax Law of Palmyra as a parallel for the exaction of money tariffs on a local level.<sup>20</sup> This may not be a valid parallel in view of the time elapsed between the two inscriptions and the changes in the economy in that period.

The final category of “taxes” encompasses compulsory services, *munera sordida*, many related to the army. These included compulsory hospitality to officials and soldiers and such duties as baking military biscuit and compulsory labor. These were discussed in more detail in chapter 3. Undoubtedly, many of these services originated in the Principate; our increased knowledge of them in the late empire is partly due to late antique law codes. However, the increased emphasis on cities as centers of defense and the stationing of units within them in the later empire increased the importance of such services.

In general the emphasis in late Roman taxation was on payment in kind and direct provision of services to officials and the army rather than payment of taxes in cash. When coinage was involved in the process, it was generally expressed in gold *solidi*, which possessed intrinsic value, or as gold or silver bullion. Neither of these forms of exchange were vulnerable to the changes in value typical of the nominally silver token coinage of the third century.

18. De Laet, *Portorium*, 462; CJ 4.61, *De vect.* 13; R. Mouterde, “Un Tarif d’impôt sur les ventes dans la Bérée byzantine,” *CRAI* (1945): 377–80.

19. G. Dagron and D. Feissel, *Inscriptions de Cilicie* (1987), no. 108.

20. D. Potter, “Recent Inscriptions from Flat Cilicia,” *JRA* 2 (1989): 305–12.

Imperial estates were another source of state revenue, primarily in kind. The evidence for their location and existence in the Principate was discussed in chapter 5, and their acquisition by the emperor was cumulative, as more lands were inherited or confiscated. As I noted earlier, nearly one-sixth of the territory of Cyrrhus was imperial property by ca. A.D. 446/7,<sup>21</sup> and doubtless a much higher proportion of land belonged to the emperor in areas of Syria and Mesopotamia that had not been dominated by the territories of the Hellenistic cities. Administrators of imperial estates, *procuratores saltuum*, are recorded in the *Notitia Dignitatum* under the control of the *comes rerum privatarum*, an official who administered the *res privata* of the emperor.<sup>22</sup>

### Money, the Army, and the Economy in the Later Empire

Chapter 5 demonstrated the importance of the interrelationship of taxation in cash, army pay, and economic transactions between soldiers and civilians in the Principate. A study of the same elements in the later empire is of equal value, although the different nature of taxation in this period, with an emphasis on produce in kind and bullion, might lead us to expect differences in other elements of the late Roman economy.

### Army Pay and Subsistence Allowances in the Later Empire

As one might expect from the tax system, the emphasis in such legal sources as the Theodosian Code regarding army pay in this period is on provision of subsistence allowances in kind, the *annona militaris*. Repeated imperial rescripts of the fourth century state the illegality of commuting such allowances to cash but show that such abuses were common.<sup>23</sup> The nature and scale of these allowances are not well documented. Evidence for peacetime rations exists only from sixth-century Egypt, and then only for atypical troops, such as *bucellarii*, rather than regular soldiers.<sup>24</sup> There are more references to rations issued during wartime, *expeditionalis annona*. One passage contrasts these (unspecified) rations with the bread and wine that presumably were included in the regular ration. This distinction is clarified by Ammianus' reference

21. See Theodoret *Ep.* 42.

22. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 14.7.

23. *C.Th.* 7.14.18 (A.D. 393), 20 (A.D. 393), 21 (A.D. 396); 8.4.6 (A.D. 358).

24. See *LRE* 2: 629 and 3: 191 n. 44.

to Julian ordering his soldiers to turn their grain ration into biscuit (*bucellatum*), probably instead of keeping it to be made into bread as would happen in peacetime. The Theodosian Code refers to such rations composed of two days of biscuit and one of bread in every three, alternating days of sour and ordinary wine, with mutton on two days of every three and pork on the third day. Quantities are not stated.<sup>25</sup>

The legalization of the receipt of rations in gold instead of kind seems to have developed through the fifth century in the east, although it never became universal. The Theodosian Code refers to legal commutation of rations of *limitanei* of Palestine to cash in A.D. 409 and to commutation of rations of *familiae* (probably soldiers' families, as argued in chapter 4) in *Oriens* and Egypt in the same year.<sup>26</sup> However, the limited evidence does not demonstrate a complete and consistent shift to commutation of rations to gold—at least a legal one—even by the reign of Justinian.<sup>27</sup> Evidence for the rates of commutation is equally unsatisfactory. Sometimes this was done at prevailing market rates, alternatively at a fixed rate (as *aerariae annonae*).<sup>28</sup>

However, rations in kind and commutation thereof were not the only elements of military pay. A papyrus documenting army pay in A.D. 299 and 300 reveals that troops were paid *stipendia* (regular cash salaries) and *donativa* (donatives) on imperial anniversaries.<sup>29</sup> Duncan-Jones calculated the annual *stipendium* in this document as eighteen hundred denarii for legionaires and *alares* (auxiliary cavalry) and twelve hundred denarii for other auxiliaries, presumably paid in the bronze *folles* coinage of the period. The same papyrus indicates payment of donatives on the birthdays of Caesares and Augusti at rates of twenty-five hundred and twelve hundred denarii. Duncan-Jones notes that basic legionary pay had increased by a factor of six since the reign of Domitian but that in the same period the cost of wheat had risen by a factor of about sixty-seven. He concludes that the real value of army pay had dropped considerably in that time, even when donatives and rations in kind are taken into account.<sup>30</sup> The

25. *C.Th.* 7.4.4 (A.D. 358, 360, 361); Ammianus Marcellinus 17.8.2 (A.D. 358); *C.Th.* 7.4.6 (A.D. 360). Discussed by Jones in *LRE* 2: 628–29 and 3:191 n. 44.

26. *C.Th.* 7.4.30 (A.D. 409), 31 (A.D. 409).

27. Cf. *LRE* 1: 208, 397, 460; 2: 672.

28. See *LRE* 1: 461. For local market rates, see *C.Th.* 7.4.28 (A.D. 406), 35 (A.D. 412), 36 (A.D. 424); for *annonae aerariae*, *C.Th.* 7.4.34 (A.D. 414), 35 (A.D. 423), 36 (A.D. 424).

29. P. Beatty Panop. 2.

30. Duncan-Jones, "Pay and Numbers in Diocletian's Army," in *Structure and Scale*, 105–17, superseding *LRE* 2: 623 and 3: 189 n. 33, which overestimated the number of

preface to Diocletian's *Edictum de Pretiis* shows concern over the limited purchasing power of military *stipendia*. Even in that inscription, the daily wage of a farm laborer was set at twenty-five denarii, about four times the value of the soldiers' *stipendium*. A single *modius castrensis* of wheat (about enough for one individual for a month) cost one hundred denarii.

*Stipendia* and *donativa* paid out in bronze coinage to soldiers probably account for large quantities of such coins found on sites with military connections. Harper, the excavator of Dibsi Faraj, notes that few coins found there dated to before the fortification of the "citadel" there ca. A.D. 296/7, but there were many tetrarchic and later issues.<sup>31</sup> It is true that this site combined a fortress with a civilian urban settlement, and civilian sources might account for the change, but army pay is one likely explanation for the increase in coinage from the tetrarchic period. Similarly, army pay and donatives may account for most of the 125 late Roman and Byzantine bronze coins (most of the recognizable ones of the mint of Antioch) from the military site of el-Lejjun in Arabia, apparently constructed in the A.D. 290s.<sup>32</sup> However, given the low value of the coins, the injection of money into the civilian economies of these two sites was of much less significance than, for example, the injection of higher-value silver denarii into Dura by soldiers in the second century. The only high-value coin found at el-Lejjun was a gold solidus of Valentinian found in the centurion's quarters of a barrack building. Betlyon suggests that it was hidden there before the centurion's departure on active service, and it is likely that this coin represented part of the soldier's savings rather than something that might be spent in the civilian settlement adjacent to the fortress.<sup>33</sup>

Besides commutation of rations, precious metal was most likely to find its way into soldiers' hands at this period as special donatives given on imperial accessions and quinquennial celebrations. An early example of this is mentioned by Ammianus regarding the accession of Julian in A.D.

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soldiers per unit and hence underestimated what each was paid. Also see M.F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300–1450* (1985), 176–78, 187–90.

31. Harper, "Excavations at Dibsi Faraj," 325.

32. See J.W. Betlyon, "Coins, Commerce, and Politics," in *The Roman Frontier in Central Jordan: Interim Report on the Limes Arabicus Project, 1980–85*, ed. S.T. Parker (1987), 655–89.

33. *Ibid.*, 671, no. 68. Of course, as I noted in chap. 5, the rarity of high-value coins found on any site relates to their lower loss rate rather than directly representing their significance in circulation.

360, a donative of five gold solidi and a pound of silver bullion. This seems to have remained into the sixth century.<sup>34</sup> Given the high value of the gold coins and the award of silver in bullion form, it would seem that these donatives were more likely to be saved than spread into the civilian economy by economic transactions between civilians and soldiers.

### Economic Transactions between Soldiers and Civilians in the Later Empire

In the previous chapter it seemed reasonable to assume that the acquisition of supplies in the Principate for the provincial garrison as a whole and of goods and services by individual soldiers was performed mostly in cash. However, the emphasis on collection of taxes and payment of troops in kind in the later empire leads one to expect that cash was less important then. Evidence regarding soldiers' rations suggests that most were issued in kind from tax collected in kind.

With the understanding that most soldiers' rations were collected in kind at this period, it is interesting to examine the sources of this food and the general evidence for government organization of long-distance army supply at the time. As in the Principate, probably the state preferred to acquire bulky foodstuffs locally as much as possible, due to the expense and slowness of overland transport. Indeed, it has been suggested that the small size and dispersed peacetime deployment of army units in the later empire related to the logistical difficulties of maintaining a large force in one area on a permanent basis.<sup>35</sup> Certainly the importance of fortress cities reflects these logistical requirements. The regular city garrisons recorded in the *Notitia Dignitatum* were fairly small, and the cities themselves were obvious centers in which to keep food stocks, because they were secure, because each was a focus for the administration and control of the surrounding countryside, and because they were situated on major transportation routes, such as roads and rivers.

Undoubtedly, many of the required supplies were acquired as tax in kind locally by military units using what appears to have been legally approved methods (set out in chap. 3). Tax was collected by curial officers, then passed on to civilian imperial officials and hence to military units. However, it is clear that basic or additional rations were acquired

34. Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.18; see *LRE* 2: 624.

35. See, e.g., Hopkins, "Taxes and Trade," 124.

locally by less legal means, ranging from the extortions of the Gothic soldiers in Edessa and the illegal demands for extra rations (*cenatica superstatuta*) recorded in the Theodosian Code to the technically illegal direct collection of regular tax by soldiers attested in the Abinnaeus archive. (All of these means are discussed in chap. 3). Besides tax revenues, legal sources of supplies in kind included rent in kind from imperial estates, frontier lands assigned to barbarian troops to defend, territories assigned to border forts themselves, which may have been cultivated by individuals, such as *castellani milites*, by the fifth century, and eventually land cultivated by regular soldiers (*limitanei*) themselves, attested by the mid-fifth century A.D.<sup>36</sup>

Even if supplies were acquired locally, some transport was required in most cases. This topic is prominent in the Theodosian Code. One passage specifically refers to the transport of supplies to *limitanei*, regular frontier troops, suggesting that this was a standard peacetime procedure rather than just an emergency requirement to supply large expeditionary forces in wartime.<sup>37</sup> It is clear that this transport was a liturgy imposed on the curial classes of the cities, like that attested in third-century Cilicia. There is much evidence regarding this liturgy in the fourth century in speeches and letters of Libanius. He claims that losses incurred in undertaking such duties in the Tigris area in Constantius' reign ruined many councillors of Antioch, and he also refers to regular transport of supplies by curials of Antioch to the fortresses of Callinicum and Barbalissus on the Euphrates.

Regular supply of army units in peacetime was a complex issue, but provisioning a major expeditionary force was a tremendous burden. This is shown by accounts of two major wars against the Sassanians, Julian's campaign of A.D. 363 and warfare in northern Mesopotamia in the reign of Anastasius, early in the sixth century. Regarding the fourth century, Libanius claimed that Antioch always had been able to bear the burden of the emperor and imperial armies and asked Julian's forgiveness for the hostility he had met there in A.D. 362–63.<sup>38</sup> Julian's interven-

36. See *C.Th.* 7.15.1 (A.D. 409; on lands assigned to *gentiles*, specifically referring to Africa), 2 (A.D. 423; on fort territories and the *castellani milites*); *NTh.* 24.1.4 (A.D. 443, = *CJ* 11.60.3; on cultivation of land by *limitanei*). See Isaac, "The Meaning of the Terms *Limes* and *Limitanei*," 144–47, which refutes the notion that *limitanei* were a part-time hereditary peasant militia.

37. *C.Th.* 11.1.21 (A.D. 385; on transport to *limitanei*), 11.1.11 (A.D. 385; on transport of taxes in kind to frontier areas).

38. Libanius *Or.* 15.16–17, 21.

tion in a food shortage was one reason for this hostility. Several authors refer to this incident, including Ammianus, Libanius, and Julian himself.<sup>39</sup> It seems that Julian fixed grain prices at a low level, then there was a crop failure, and the combination of the low price and the shortage led to hoarding and profiteering by large landowners. Julian brought in supplies himself and sold them at a fixed price, and in the course of the whole affair, he managed to incur the wrath of at least the large landowners and shopkeepers, if not the entire population. Only one account of this famine, that of the ecclesiastical historian Socrates, indicates that Julian's army, based in and around Antioch in preparation for the forthcoming campaign against the Persians, exacerbated the shortage of food.<sup>40</sup> It is unlikely that the combination of famine and an imperial army at Antioch was coincidental. A similar crisis struck the city a few years earlier when Gallus was preparing a campaign against the Persians.<sup>41</sup> Undoubtedly the city's food supply was affected adversely by the combination of a heavy *indictio* in preparation for the campaign, the use of food stocks under imperial control (such as the rents from imperial estates) to supply soldiers when they might otherwise have been sold on the market, compulsory purchase, and extortion. In response to the problem, Julian brought in supplies, presumably using supply networks. Some grain came from Hierapolis and Chalcis, perhaps from imperial estates or government *horrea*, and Julian wrote that some was "brought in for me" (presumably for Julian's army) from Egypt.<sup>42</sup> As in the third century, sometimes grain was brought to Syria from overseas. The *Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium*, dating to the mid-fourth century, refers to the supply of grain to the eastern frontier provinces from Egypt *propter exercitum imperatoris et bellum Persarum* [on account of the emperor's army and the Persian war].<sup>43</sup>

Several authors refer to logistical arrangements after Julian's army set out from Antioch. They emphasize river transport, and both Libanius and Ammianus refer to large numbers of boats on the Euphrates carrying

39. Ammianus Marcellinus 22.14.1; Libanius *Or.* 15.21, 18.195; Julian *Misopogon* 350A, 368C–370A.

40. Socrates (*HE* 3.17) states that when Julian lowered prices, he did not consider how much trouble the presence of an army causes to a province and how much it reduces the supply of provisions to cities. The merchants and traders, unable to sustain their losses, stopped trading.

41. See Ammianus Marcellinus 14.7.2.

42. Julian *Misopogon* 369A.

43. *Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium* 36.

supplies and equipment.<sup>44</sup> Harbor works at Seleucia Pieria in the reign of Constantius II and an imperial rescript of A.D. 370 referring to the *classis Seleucena* and its duties clearing the Orontes River suggest that earlier military supply routes from Seleucia were still employed in the fourth century.<sup>45</sup> Ammianus states that a tribune and *comes* commanded the fleet of transports that accompanied Julian's army. Further information on officials responsible for army supply at this time is provided by Libanius, who indicates that the *comes orientis* Modestus had engaged in military activity in Euphratensis in A.D. 358/9.<sup>46</sup> Malalas stated that the first *comes orientis* was appointed in the consulship of Iulius Constantius and Ceionius Rufus Albinus (A.D. 335) to fulfill the role of the praetorian prefect in the east and that he replaced the *delegator* at Antioch after the subsequent Persian war. This suggests that the office of *comes orientis* originated to organize military supply. Thus Modestus' presence in a military capacity in Euphratensis and his attested travels throughout the eastern provinces, including Egypt, probably related to army supply arrangements.<sup>47</sup>

The Syriac *Chronicle* traditionally attributed to Joshua the Stylite provides us with information on the logistics of a war fought a century and a half later in northern Mesopotamia, in the reign of Anastasius, in the first decade of the sixth century A.D. Again, there is discussion of famine and food prices with little explicit reference to war as a cause, except in sieges, such as at Amida in A.D. 504/5, when the besieged Persians allowed the civilian population to starve and used the remaining food supplies for their own soldiers.<sup>48</sup> However, even when the link was not stated explicitly, it apparently existed. For example, the author attributes the famine of A.D. 499–500 in Edessa to a plague of locusts, but Anastasius' response to requests for relief included not only a remission of taxes but also abolition of the duty of carrying water for soldiers.<sup>49</sup> As this and the general descriptions of military activity indicate, there were many soldiers in and around Edessa, and their presence and constant warfare undoubtedly had a damaging effect on the food supply of the cities.

In A.D. 502/3 large numbers of troops were based in Edessa, and an

44. Libanius Or. 18.214. Ammianus Marcellinus 23.3.9 refers to one thousand ships. According to Malalas 329, Magnus of Carrhae, who accompanied Julian, recorded that he obtained boats made of hides and of wood from Samosata.

45. C.Th. 10.23.1 (A.D. 370): *ad auxilium purgandi Orontis*.

46. See Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, 110, citing Libanius Ep. 46, 49, 58.

47. Malalas 319. See Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, 110.

48. Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* (ed. Wright), 76.

49. Ibid., 38–39.

official named Appion was in charge of logistical arrangements. He provided citizens with 630,000 *modii* of wheat to bake military biscuit (*bucellatum*) for the troops.<sup>50</sup> Baking biscuit for the army is a regular theme in Joshua Stylites' account of the war. In A.D. 503/4 Calliopius provided 850,000 *modii* of wheat for the same purpose, while Appion went to Alexandria to get biscuit from there, demonstrating that Egypt still was an important source of supply for large armies on the eastern frontier.<sup>51</sup>

In A.D. 504/5 the Edessans baked 630,000 *modii* of biscuit for the field army at Amida, in addition to that baked in the territory of the city and by professional bakers in the city. The Syriac author mentions that many citizens and their cattle died transporting food to the army at Amida.<sup>52</sup> Transport of supplies was still a liturgy in the early Byzantine period. The cattle that Joshua Stylites indicated died en route to Amida may have been draft animals rather than beef being transported "on the hoof," since there is no reference to beef as a component of the military ration in any of our sources.

All of this gives some impression of the organization of food supplies in kind to the later Roman army. As I suggested earlier, it is probable that much of the food was obtained from local sources when there was no large expeditionary force concentrated on the eastern frontier and forces could remain dispersed, close to state granaries. This would have been true for much of the fifth century, which was relatively peaceful in Syria and Mesopotamia. However, at times of open conflict, larger forces were concentrated. This put greater stress on local supplies; caused shortages, local price rises, and famine in civilian communities; and required long-distance transport of food from within the province and from external sources, such as Egypt, as had been required for large imperial armies in the Principate. Wartime conditions requiring such efforts existed for much of the fourth century.

It is also clear that many other military supplies were provided in kind or produced directly under imperial control at this time. The Theodosian Code refers to provision of horses as tax, although rescripts discussing the matter make it clear that commutation to gold had been legalized.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, clothing for soldiers was payable in kind as part of the regular

50. Ibid., 54.

51. See *ibid.*, 70.

52. Ibid., 77, 82.

53. *C.Th.* 11.17.1–3 (ranging from A.D. 367 to A.D. 401).

*indictiones* of tax, although a rescript of A.D. 377 shows that commutation to gold was allowed in *Oriens* (except in Osrhoene and Isauria) by then.<sup>54</sup> Finally the *Notitia Dignitatum* lists imperial *fabricae*, armories. There was one at Damascus producing shields and arms, a similar one at Antioch, another at Antioch producing armor, and one at Edessa producing shields and weapons.<sup>55</sup> Malalas states that these were established by Diocletian.<sup>56</sup>

Thus it is clear that in the later empire the Roman state no longer needed to purchase bulk supplies for cash on a regular and systematic basis. For the most part these were acquired as tax in kind or produced by imperial institutions, such as the *fabricae*. This meant that there was little injection of cash into the civilian economy by way of the army.

While a substantial proportion of economic activity in the later empire was conducted in kind or in gold coin and bullion, lower-value bronze coins were produced in quantity and, as remarked earlier, issued as a component of army pay, at least in the fourth century. It seems likely that these coins found their way from imperial mints to the civilian economy through low-value economic transactions between soldiers and civilians, just as they had done during the Principate. However, since the important and expensive supply of food, clothing, and weapons was dealt with by the government by noncash means, the total value of the cash transactions and their importance within the economy as a whole would have been low. In chapter 5, pottery was considered as a commodity perhaps bought locally by army units and individual soldiers, so it is appropriate to examine this in the later empire too.

The evidence for the pottery used by late Roman soldiers is limited by the limited excavation of appropriate sites and by a lack of detailed publication of pottery assemblages from those sites, just as in the Principate. The pottery assemblages from Dibsi Faraj dating to before and after the fortification of the citadel and its occupation by the Roman army certainly show a marked change. Harper, the excavator, notes that there was little imported pottery in the early phase of the site but a considerable quantity of imported African Red Slip ware, Late Roman "C" ware (perhaps from Asia Minor), and some Cypriot Red Slip ware

54. *C.Th.* 7.6 in general covers military clothing; 7.6.3 (A.D. 377) refers to the commutation. Earlier rescripts do not indicate commutation to gold in *Oriens*, so it may have been an innovation shortly before A.D. 377.

55. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 11.18–23.

56. Malalas 307.20–23.

in the later Roman and early Byzantine phases of the site.<sup>57</sup> The civilian sector on this mixed site might explain this change as much as might increased army activity. In fact, given the location of Dibsi Faraj on important Euphrates river and road routes, it is quite likely that civilian trade was responsible for the increase in imports.

The fortress of el-Lejjun in central Jordan (in Roman Arabia) was a specifically military site (although a civilian settlement grew up nearby), not on a major civilian trade route. Parker, who excavated the site and published the pottery, noted the homogeneity of pottery fabrics there and the fact that even pots with forms and finishes (such as slips) that superficial examination suggested were imports turned out to be petrographically identical to the majority of more obviously “local” wares. He mentions many finds of pottery wasters on the site and the existence of “tens of thousands” of ceramic tiles. All of this suggests pottery production in the fortress or its immediate vicinity and indicates that the petrographically homogeneous fabric was of local origin.<sup>58</sup>

Local production suggests two possible sources. The first is the army itself, which may have produced pottery for its own use. This would conform to the apparent preference for self-sufficiency of imperial agencies suggested, for example, by the existence of the *fabricae*. Alternatively, perhaps civilian potters living near the fortress made pots and sold them to the unit or individual soldiers for cash. This would have been one mechanism for the circulation of the bronze coinage found on the site. It is impossible to choose between these options. The pots themselves do not help much, as in form they are neither strongly characteristic of the area (which would indicate potters of local origin working in a local tradition) nor markedly alien (which would indicate potters who came in with the army). Parker cites several comparanda from Arabia and Palestine. Even if the pottery fell into a general regional tradition, this might have been due to local recruitment of soldiers, including some soldier-potters, rather than adherence to a local civilian tradition. While the majority of the pottery at el-Lejjun seems to have been of local production, Parker notes the existence of small quantities of imported material, including fragments of “hollow-foot amphorae” (see chap. 5), African

57. Harper, “Excavations at Dibsi Faraj,” 325. For the place of origin of Late Roman “C” ware, see J. Hayes, *A Supplement to Late Roman Pottery* (1980), 525–27, citing evidence from Phocaea in western Turkey.

58. S.T. Parker, “The Pottery,” 529.

Red Slip ware, Late Roman “C” ware, and Cypriot Red Slip ware, as at Dibsi Faraj.<sup>59</sup>

Thus pottery from military sites does not provide us with clear evidence for centrally administered long-distance army supply or for the local acquisition of pottery for cash in the later empire. The evidence is not good, but that from el-Lejjun does seem to imply local production, either by the army itself or by local civilians. The latter may have sold their products to the army for cash, accounting for some of the circulation of bronze coinage on that site.

### The Army and Money in the Later Empire

Much has been said already regarding the role of coinage in the later empire, including the observation that coinage was less important for some functions typical of the Principate, such as tax, army supply, and army pay. Next, one might examine some of the formal characteristics of the coinage of the later empire.<sup>60</sup>

By the time of Diocletian, the system of coinage that had prevailed in the east since the reign of Augustus had completely disappeared. Production of the SC series of imperial bronzes at Antioch had declined and ceased in the second half of the second century. The silver tetradrachm coinage ceased to be significant shortly after Caracalla’s reign. The denarius coinage ceased to circulate about midway through the third century, and production of civic bronze coins ceased within a few decades. The principal medium of monetary exchange in the second half of the third century was the “radiate,” or *antoninianus*, a coin with a very low silver content. It was produced at a variety of provincial mints, Antioch being the main source for Syria and Mesopotamia.

The reign of Diocletian and subsequent centuries saw the emergence of a monetary system in which the most important elements were gold coins with very high value and bronze coins with very low value (sometimes with a nominal silver content), with few occasional issues of pure silver coins between these major issues in value. The purity and weight of the gold coinage was systematized by Aurelian, Diocletian, and Constantine, and the gold solidus became the main high-value coinage denomination of the later empire. It does not seem to have had a consistent relationship

59. Ibid.

60. On the subject of later Roman coinage in general, see Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300–1450*, passim, especially 448–94.

to the bronze coinage in value, so in essence its value was the bullion value of the gold of which it was made. It was produced at a variety of eastern mints, including Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople, until the late fourth century, when minting was carried out at Constantinople alone. Successors to the denarius and radiates were *folles* and *nummi*, with a variable but minimal silver content (if any) and a fixed token value. These were produced in quantity, initially at a variety of provincial mints, but at Constantinople alone from the later fifth century. Silver issues were produced only sporadically, and for the most part there was no coin between the gold solidi with very high value and the base-metal token coinage. In effect, there were two separate systems, with very little practical means of exchange between them.

These two elements of the late Roman coinage relate to the two cash components of army pay discussed earlier, namely, the high-value gold donatives and the lower-value donatives and *stipendia*. As I noted earlier in this chapter, the high-value donative, at least on the accession of Julian, was composed of five solidi and a pound of silver bullion. Burnett suggests that the solidi and pounds of silver bullion that made up the Water Newton hoard in England related to such accession donatives.<sup>61</sup> Earlier I discussed the papyrological evidence for the regular lower-value donatives and *stipendia*, expressed in denarii. We may assume that these coinages were produced, partly at least, to make these payments.

As I noted earlier regarding Dibli Faraj and el-Lejjun, the army probably still was an important mechanism by which coins came into circulation in the late empire, but only low-value bronze coins, a fairly small proportion of the total value of army pay compared to the gold and rations in kind. The high value of individual gold coins meant that they were not practical for civilian transactions, and one imagines that they were accumulated as savings by soldiers and officials rather than put into circulation. The importance of silver denarii and tetradrachms in the Principate was not matched by any equivalent in the late empire.

Hence, in general the army probably continued to be important in the money economy of the later empire, but money was then a much less significant component of the economy as a whole. The army was the main recipient of the tax in kind that was the most important nonmoney component, but this was a one-way exploitative process, quite unlike the

61. Burnett, *Coinage in the Roman World*, 129.

“cycling” process by which coinage was transferred between civilian and army in the Principate.

### Production, Trade, and Wealth in the Later Empire

In Hopkins’ model of the economy of the Principate, there was a structural link between tax and trade, because agricultural surplus was converted to cash to pay cash taxes. This could be done by production of cash crops for export rather than for local subsistence or by sale of agricultural produce to support artisans who produced goods for export. Since taxes were exacted primarily in kind in the later empire, Hopkins predicts that there was a lower volume of artisan activity and export, because agricultural surplus was taken directly rather than requiring conversion to cash.<sup>62</sup>

Testing this prediction is as difficult as testing the corresponding hypothesis for the Principate, due to limited survival of high-value artisan goods, such as textiles. Procopius mentions that silk textiles had been produced at Berytus and Tyre ἐκ παλαιοῦ [since antiquity] and that Justinian fixed the price of such goods at not more than eight solidi per pound.<sup>63</sup> However, such commodities do not survive. Those forms of evidence that do survive, such as survey information, excavation, and pottery have tended to be recorded and published less rigorously than in the western Mediterranean, although this is changing.

Again, one can employ pottery as a “marker” for perishable goods. While the most common fineware in the eastern Mediterranean in the early Principate, Eastern Sigillata A, may have been produced in and exported from Syro-Palestine, the most common finewares on late Roman sites in Syria, such as Dibsi Faraj, are imported African Red Slip ware, Late Roman “C” ware (“Phocaeen Red Slip”), and Cypriot Red Slip ware. The import of these wares at least shows the continued existence of civilian trading routes including Syria, as there is no reason to assume that these pots arrived as part of a politically “embedded” process, such as long-distance army supply. Proof of this is the fact that African Red Slip ware was imported into the eastern empire long after the political division of east and west.

However, one specific group of pots produced in Syria in the late third

62. Hopkins, “Taxes and Trade,” 124.

63. Procopius *Anecdota* 24.14, 16.

and fourth centuries was exported widely. These are the so-called North Syrian *mortaria*, specialized large grinding bowls.<sup>64</sup> Examples have been found throughout the eastern Mediterranean and a few as far away as Britain and the Rhine frontier. They were produced in a distinctive form and a dark chocolate-brown fabric with white and black grits and crushed glass inclusions. Many were stamped with a Greek name in the genitive case, a few in Latin. By chance, a production site with kiln wasters and fragments spread over several miles was found at Ras el-Basit, on the Syrian coast just south of the mouth of the Orontes. This shows large-scale artisan production of a specialized group of wares for export. Their export may indicate trading routes used for other goods too, although it is possible that such pots with a specialized function were traded per se rather than with other goods. In itself, this “industry” constituted a tiny element of the regional economy, but the degree of chance involved in locating the production site in Syria suggests that further fieldwork might reveal evidence of other artisan production.

The next form of evidence to be examined is that of field survey and rural excavation, to see if there was an increase of agricultural production particularly of cash crops, in the later Roman period. In chapter 5, the high density of rural settlement in the plain of Antioch in the Principate revealed by Braidwood’s survey was noted.<sup>65</sup> Braidwood’s period I, “early Christian, c. A.D. 350–600,” dated by later Roman red-slipped wares, shows dramatic change. Of 178 sites recorded, only 15 showed evidence of settlement in period I. This apparent decline in settlement is unprecedented in this region at this period and may relate more to the survival of evidence than to actual settlement. Braidwood notes the existence of ruins of this period in the hills to the south and east of the plain itself and suggests that at this period the land was owned by large landowners who lived in residences in Antioch or in the hills, while peasants lived in semipermanent reed villages on the plain.<sup>66</sup>

In sharp contrast to this is evidence from Wilkinson’s survey work east of the Euphrates in southeast Turkey, in what was the western part of Roman Osroene.<sup>67</sup> In this project, period L represented the later Roman

64. The discussion that follows is derived from J.W. Hayes, “North Syrian Mortaria,” *Hesperia* 36 (1967): 337–47, and from the subsequent, fuller study by M. Vallerin, “*Pelves estampillées de Bassit*,” *Syria* 71 (1994): 171–204.

65. Citing Braidwood, *Mounds in the Plain of Antioch*.

66. *Ibid.*, 46.

67. Wilkinson, *Town and Country*.

and early Byzantine periods, from the late third to the early seventh centuries A.D., and sites of this period were dated from stratified pottery from Dibsi Faraj. As I noted earlier, evidence from this project suggests gradual growth of settlement throughout the Principate before and after the Roman occupation of Osrhoene, and period L seems to have seen the peak of that growth, in terms of both number of sites and their total area.<sup>68</sup> On the basis of site distributions and manuring-sherd scatters, Wilkinson suggests that the late Roman period was one of intensive arable and legume cultivation in the lowlands, that settlement expanded into the uplands wherever possible, and that for the most part those hilly areas were used for pasturing livestock.<sup>69</sup> Algaze's survey in the Euphrates valley between Zeugma and Carchemish also shows a peak of site density in the late Roman/early Byzantine period.<sup>70</sup>

Another area considered in chapter 5 was the limestone massif east of Antioch, studied by Tchalenko. The fourth to sixth centuries there saw dramatic growth and distinctive changes in the settlement pattern, with large-scale development of villages with elaborate architecture, which Tchalenko suggests were inhabited primarily by small owner-occupiers. In particular, there was denser occupation of mountainous areas of the massif, more suited to olive cultivation than arable farming. Some upland villages developed around earlier villa sites, such as Bamuqqa. Others began in the fourth to sixth centuries. One example was Behyo, which began as a church, a "villa" (Tchalenko's term describing a medium-sized farm), some smaller dwellings, and five olive presses in the mid-fifth century.<sup>71</sup> Tchalenko recognized two later phases of development, which saw the construction of further, smaller "villas," poorer residences, more presses, and finally a mid-sixth-century church and another group of small villas. He records that thirty-seven olive presses were discovered in and around the village, which only contained sixteen dwellings considered to be large enough to have been the homes of landowners. He

68. See *ibid.*, 117–26.

69. Manuring sherds are potsherds that were carried out from settlements with night soil and other refuse used in manuring areas of relatively intensive agricultural activity nearby.

70. Algaze et al., "The Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project: A Preliminary Report," 205–8; Algaze, Breuninger, and Knudstad, "The Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project: Final Report," 19–22.

71. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 1:343–73, 2: pls. CX–CXXIII. The dating was based on the architecture of the church and villa.

suggests that the *raison d'être* of such villages was monoculture of olive oil for export and that the scarcity of good arable land in the area meant that the inhabitants would have been dependent on the import of subsistence foods, such as grain.<sup>72</sup>

The late Roman period also saw the growth of two particularly large agglomerations of settlement that Tchalenko describes as “upland agricultural centers,” namely, Brad and el Bara.<sup>73</sup> He suggests that the economic basis of these communities was not only production of agricultural goods but also processing and transport of produce from the region. He cites, for example, olive presses and storage tanks to support this hypothesis. Brad seems to have been a substantial community already in the second and third centuries A.D., but it grew considerably in the fourth to sixth centuries. El Bara started in the fourth century and grew over the next two centuries.

Thus, in the later Roman period, the limestone massif saw considerable expansion of settlement, particularly into upland areas, and increased development in olive production. The survey evidence used by Tchalenko has been the subject of extensive recent restudy by Georges Tate.<sup>74</sup> He retains Tchalenko's general picture of expansion in the region but plays down the latter's emphasis on development of olive oil monoculture, stressing evidence for mixed agricultural regimes, including arable cultivation, stock raising, and arboriculture. Likewise, he eschews Tchalenko's attempts to construct a hierarchy of sites and occupants (including large proprietors in “villas”), in favor of emphasis on the homogeneity of free peasant farmers and their farms.

Tchalenko carried out an intensive surface study of D  h  s, a village that grew considerably in late antiquity. He noted the presence of land suited to arable cultivation to the north, but he emphasized the importance of olive oil production as its economic base.<sup>75</sup> Recent excavation at D  h  s by Sodini has come up with important results modifying Tchalenko's conclusions, just as Tate reevaluated the survey evidence. The first change regards architectural function. Tchalenko interpreted a cluster of buildings surrounding a courtyard in the center of the village as including an agora complex and a public meeting place, or *andron*.

72. Ibid., 1:343, 372.

73. Ibid., 1:387–90, 2: pls. CXXXIII, CXXXVII–CXXXIX.

74. Tate, *Campagnes*.

75. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 2: pl. CXXXVI, no. 30.

Sodini interprets all these structures as houses and farm buildings on the basis of excavation.<sup>76</sup> The excavation clarified the chronology of the settlement too, revealing an early phase of construction in the second half of the fourth century and a second, more elaborate phase in which building plots were subdivided into smaller units in the sixth century. The most important conclusions for our purposes concern the economic base of the community. While acknowledging the importance of olive oil production (twenty-one presses were found there), the excavators warn against overestimating the level of dependence on a monoculture, noting the fertile pockets of *terra rossa* soil, suited to arable farming, around the village.<sup>77</sup> Also, they indicate that stock raising played a part of hitherto unsuspected importance in the local economy. The preliminary report on the faunal remains from the site shows a surprisingly high proportion of cattle bones, in addition to the sheep and goat bones that would be expected in an upland area. Tchalenko had already suggested that the porticoed shelters that formed part of the houses were used for animals, perhaps horses or mules, but Sodini believes that they may have been used for other animals—cattle, for example.<sup>78</sup> Hence one must be cautious and not accept the results of Tchalenko's surface survey uncritically. However, the quantity of evidence for olive oil production and processing in the massif as a whole implies a significant intensification in the later Roman period as part of the general growth in the region.<sup>79</sup>

There is some pottery evidence that may relate to this growth in olive oil production. This is the large-scale production and export of one particular amphora class, Peacock and Williams' class 44, often known as Carthage Late Roman Amphora 1 from John Riley's typology of ampho-

76. G. Tchalenko, "Traits originaux du peuplement de la haute-Syrie." *Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes* 21 (1971), 290–91, pl. LXXXV and LXXXVI. Sodini et al., "Déhès (Syrie du Nord)," 50, 288–89.

77. Ibid., 5–6, 294, 298.

78. Ibid., 293, 303.

79. An excavation that sheds light on the expansion of olive oil production in the east is the Canadian-Turkish project at Domuztepe, a village north of Hierapolis-Castabala in Cilicia Tracheia, published in J.J. Rossiter and J. Freed, "Canadian-Turkish Excavations at Domuztepe, Cilicia (1989)," *Echos du Monde Classique/Classical Views*, n.s., 10 (1991): 145–71. They excavated a building that proved to be an olive-pressing complex, with presses and large (five-thousand-liter) storage tanks, suggesting commercial production. They suggest that the site developed in the later fourth century A.D. and was destroyed in the late fifth century. Survey in the hinterland indicated a fifth- and sixth-century peak of settlement there.

rae from University of Michigan excavations at Carthage.<sup>80</sup> This has a wide distribution in quantity, both in the eastern Mediterranean (Egypt, Syro-Palestine, Cyprus, Constantinople) and further west (Carthage, Rome, and even Britain). The earliest examples do not date before the very end of the fourth century A.D., and most datable examples come from later fifth- and sixth-century contexts.

Once, they were assumed to have been produced in Egypt, but petrological analysis suggests this is unlikely. Peacock and Williams noted several areas with the ultrabasic geology (including the minerals pyroxene and serpentine) that characterized the production areas. These include Lesbos, Euboea, the southwest coast of Asia Minor, Cyprus, and the coast of northern Roman Syria. They linked possible production in northern Syria to expansion of olive oil processing there and suggested that this amphora class was used to transport Syrian olive oil. More recently, Empereur and Picon claimed that large deposits of these amphorae on the coast of Roman Syria (north of ancient Seleucia Pieria), on the coast of Roman Cilicia, in southern Cyprus, and in Rhodes indicate production in those areas.<sup>81</sup> Their evidence has not been published in sufficient detail to be certain that these were production sites, and it has not been proved that olive oil was the main commodity transported in the vessels.<sup>82</sup> However, if production sites were verified and the principal contents established as olive oil, this class of amphorae would provide evidence of export of oil from those areas in great quantity. In general these amphorae seem relatively uncommon at inland sites, such as D  h  s and Androna, but they are the most common type on site BEY 006 at Beirut.<sup>83</sup> However, it is still too early to judge if there is a real concentration on the coast rather than inland.

The next question concerns the character and motivation of this expansion and, perhaps, increased export. It is unlikely that all the movement of goods represented by the amphora distributions can be explained by official supply. Certainly such amphorae were exported to Constantinople,

80. Peacock and Williams, *Amphorae and the Roman Economy*, 185–87.

81. Empereur and Picon, “Les R  gions de production d’amphores,” 236–43.

82. For doubts, see Rossiter and Freed, “Canadian-Turkish Excavations at Domuztepe,” 158 n. 22, 159 n. 23. The pitch linings of several examples from Karanis (unpublished, in the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology in Ann Arbor, Michigan) suggest that wine could be carried in this form.

83. See Sodini et al., “D  h  s (Syrie du Nord).” Concerning Androna, this is a personal observation (based on the 1998 excavation directed by Dr. Marlia Mango of the University of Oxford). On Beirut, see J. Evans, “Islamic and Roman Pottery.”

and this export might relate to politically “tied” economic activity, such as the payment of official salaries in kind from tax revenues, imperial supply of food for the civilian population, and the kind of movement of agricultural surplus from estates by the church and absentee landowners described for the later empire by Whittaker.<sup>84</sup> However, examples show up on most sites in the eastern Mediterranean and also in quantity in areas outside the political control of the eastern empire at the time of production, such as in Africa, Italy, and Britain. This suggests that much of the trade was commercial. Rossiter and Freed relate the expansion of olive oil production in Cilicia to disruption of exports of African oil caused by the Vandal invasion of A.D. 425.<sup>85</sup> This theory works when based on the chronology of the Domuztepe site and their survey evidence. However, many of the oil-producing sites in the Syrian limestone massif start in the fourth century, and the export of the amphorae probably began before the Vandal invasion of Africa. Export increased in the second half of the century, and disruption of African supplies enhanced opportunities for export. However, olive trees take a long time to grow to maturity, and it is unlikely that production expanded suddenly to meet a commercial opportunity. It seems simpler to assume that increased production of olive oil in the limestone massif was a response to demographic growth in Syria and hence growth in demand and local markets, with some surplus available for export overseas. Tate prefers this explanation for the increase of olive oil production in the massif, while Tchalenko emphasized overseas markets as a primary factor.

Survey evidence for the later Roman period from all these areas in Syria, except for Braidwood’s atypical data from the plain of Antioch, indicates increased inhabitation and exploitation of upland areas, which had not been settled very densely in earlier centuries. This implies increased exploitation of marginal land that had not been used earlier, when the preference was for activity in the lowlands and foothills. The expansion probably relates to an increased demand for food or for cash derived from agricultural surplus. Increased demand for subsistence caused by a growth population is one possibility. Wilkinson’s evidence for increase not only in site numbers but also in total site area indicates that this is a very likely explanation.

84. C.R. Whittaker, “Late Roman Trade and Traders,” in *Trade in the Ancient Economy*, ed. P. Garnsey, K. Hopkins, and C.R. Whittaker (1983), 163–80. For the type at Constantinople, see J.W. Hayes, *Excavations at Sarāḡhane in Istanbul*, vol. 2, *The Pottery* (1992), type 5.

85. Rossiter and Freed, “Canadian-Turkish Excavations at Domuztepe,” 173.

tion, although he does not have good evidence for the population status of major cities nearby, such as Samosata.<sup>86</sup>

Another possibility is that an increased tax burden caused by wars on the eastern frontier in the later third and fourth centuries led to gradual expansion into more marginal areas. While Hopkins' model associates the "stimulation" of agricultural expansion, particularly in the production of cash crops like olives, with taxation in money, olive oil was a component of the military ration and hence a tax in kind. The increasing estrangement of the eastern and western empires from the early fourth century meant that the eastern imperial administration was less able to draw on African olive oil, if it had done so before. This may have led to an increase in demand for local oil by imperial authorities. While the main economic focus of the new upland sites was olive production, some land was suited to production of grain, which the army also required. Finally, the evidence for stock raising at D  h  s is interesting, for while beef does not seem to have been a major component of the military diet, the army used large quantities of leather. Hence cattle raising served the dual function of providing leather, perhaps for the imperial *fabricae* in Antioch, and meat, which could be marketed or eaten locally.

In fact, as I discussed in chapter 5, Tate's restudy of the limestone massif suggests a reverse correlation of military activity and economic growth registered in terms of new building activity in the villages he sampled. As for the Principate, he provides a more refined chronology for the development of the region in the late imperial period. He sees the period of A.D. 320–480 as one of great growth in building, especially A.D. 410–80, with a slackening of new house construction from ca. A.D. 480 to ca. A.D. 550 and limited activity to A.D. 610. One must be cautious in attempting to tie this too closely to political events on the frontier, but as I noted in the previous chapter, the increase in new building ca. A.D. 320 may represent accumulation of surplus after the settlement of Galerius and Diocletian (at the end of the third century) brought an end to extraordinary demands for

86. The equation between number of sites and area of sites is important because it shows that there was not a change from few, large (and probably densely populated) sites to many, small (lower population) sites but a general growth of population. However, the city populations are important, because increased settlement in the country might result from emigration from cities. Archaeological evidence from Antioch and Apamea suggests that these cities were fairly prosperous, at least in the fifth and early sixth centuries. The lack of sites in the plain of Antioch at this period may imply change in location of rural settlement (perhaps a switch from subsistence production in the arable rich plain to olive cash-crop farming in the uplands) rather than change in population.

military supplies. Growth seems to have continued despite the wars of the fourth century, but it is not surprising to see evidence for particular growth in construction in the fifth century, the most settled period on the eastern frontier. Thus, again, there is a broad reverse correlation between military activity and growth in the limestone massif in the late empire, as in the Principate, suggesting that demands for military supplies (probably in kind) had a depressing effect on the rural economy. It is not impossible that increased tax demands forced some increased cultivation of marginal land, making available more surplus (to appear as subsequent building activity) after the demands ceased. However, general demographic growth under settled conditions seems to have been the principal cause of expanded agricultural activity.

The fifth century was a relatively peaceful period on the Persian frontier, although there were continued threats to the eastern empire elsewhere, from Goths and Huns. In theory the *indictio* system of taxation meant that the burden of taxation was spread evenly throughout the empire. In practice the presence of exceptional concentrations of troops on the Persian frontier probably affected Syria and Mesopotamia much more than, for example, Lycia or Asia, if only because of the burden of compulsory purchase and unofficial extortion. The end of warfare on the eastern frontier may have caused not only a general lowering of taxes in the east but also a particular reduction in the level of exploitation of Syria and Mesopotamia. The elaborate fifth- and sixth-century architecture of the Syrian villages and the fifth-century peak in new building activity there contrasts with the picture of the depressed and poverty-stricken peasants of the fourth century to whom Libanius refers.<sup>87</sup> Similarly the opulence of later imperial Apamea and Antioch, revealed by excavation, contrasts with Libanius' picture of bankrupt Antiochene curials of the fourth century.<sup>88</sup>

A decrease in official demand after expansion and increased production in the previous century perhaps made more surplus available for export in the fifth century. Class 44 amphorae were exported from the very end of the fourth or early fifth century and perhaps related to sudden availability for export of surplus previously consumed by the army. Disruption of African supplies soon afterward may have given further impetus to this export. Parallel production of the same amphora class and

87. E.g., Libanius *Or.* 50 passim. In the context, it was to Libanius' advantage to exaggerate their poverty.

88. See Libanius *Or.* 49, e.g., with the same reservation expressed in n. 87.

expansion of oil production in other areas, such as Cilicia, may have been caused by the same factors as in Syria, since third-century inscriptions from Cilicia cited in chapter 5 indicate that province was also a source of supply for the eastern frontier. Alternatively it may have been a later development in other areas, more closely related to market requirements and disruption of African production. Certainly evidence from Domuz-tepe suggests that increased oil production there did not happen until the fifth century.

There are several problems with this model of expansion and export. One is that it is unlikely that the army required so much olive oil that this demand alone generated the increase in specialized olive cultivation implied by the evidence from the limestone massif. Another is that it does not account for settlement changes in the plain of Antioch. Finally, the sixth century was a period of renewed warfare on the Persian frontier and presumably of higher taxes again. One might expect evidence for economic depression, but it seems to have been a period of continued civilian prosperity, at least in the villages. Nevertheless, this theory does have the strength of explaining an observed change that Hopkins' model did not anticipate, while continuing to emphasize the importance of the army in the regional economy.

### Conclusions

Again Hopkins' model has proved to be a useful analytical tool, and examination of the nature of taxation and army pay in the later empire revealed some characteristic features of the economy as a whole. The importance of taxation and the supply and payment of the army in kind rather than cash led to a shift away from complex "cycling" between army and civilians of the Principate to a simpler and more direct form of exploitation. Contrary to Hopkins' prediction of a decrease in trade in this economy (because it was less cash-based), there is further evidence for such trade from later Roman Syria. Of course, the evidence for production and trade is far from complete, but what there is undermines Hopkins' suggestion that the development of a cash-based economy, and in particular the exaction of taxes in cash, stimulated trade in the Principate.



## CHAPTER 7

# The Roman Army, Exploitation, and Investment

Hopkins' model of the Roman economy does not consider certain activities of economic significance undertaken by the Roman army. These fall roughly into two categories. The first is exploitation. While many subjects discussed already, such as taxation, constituted exploitation of provincial civilians by imperial authorities, there is also evidence that the army was directly involved in the extraction of certain resources from the province. These included timber (in the forests of Lebanon) and stone. The second category of activity might be termed, loosely, investment. This includes construction of buildings and "economic infrastructure" (including roads, bridges, and harbors) by soldiers and the injection of capital in the form of soldiers' savings and veterans' discharge bonuses.

### Exploitation

There is evidence from Roman Syria for two areas of direct imperial exploitation of natural resources in which the army may have played some part. The famous forests of Lebanon were an important source of timber. Direct imperial control of these forests is documented by many simple formulaic inscriptions, most carved into living rock. Eighty-six examples from Lebanese forests were published by Jean-François Breton in a volume of the *Inscriptions Grecques et Latines de la Syrie*.<sup>1</sup> The area was an imperial estate under Hadrian, who is named in the inscriptions, and it may have been acquired in A.D. 79/80 as former territories of Agrippa II.<sup>2</sup> Breton suggests that systematic delineation of areas of imperial property at that time related to the *lex Hadriana* concerning the legal position of tenants on imperial estates.<sup>3</sup> Most inscriptions include abbreviation of the

1. J.-F. Breton, *Les Inscriptions forestières d'Hadrien dans le Mont Liban* (1980).

2. See *ibid.*, 28.

3. *Ibid.*, 29.

emperor's name; *DFS*, or *d(e)f(initio) s(ilvarum)*, meaning "boundary of the woods"; and *AGIVCP*, or *a(rborum) g(enera) IV c(etera) p(rivata)*, perhaps meaning "four types of trees [reserved for the emperor], the rest for private individuals."<sup>4</sup> These territories were administered by procuratorial officials, and no evidence of military involvement survives from Lebanon itself. However, Breton cites evidence for military specialists being employed as surveyors elsewhere, and he suggests that soldiers may have been involved in the demarcation under Hadrian.<sup>5</sup>

There is much clearer evidence of direct army involvement in the process of exploitation from the stone quarries of Arulis, located close to Zeugma/Belkis.<sup>6</sup> There, incised in the living rock of the quarries, are inscriptions by soldiers of *legio IIII Scythica*, most being dedications to Jupiter Optimus Maximus and Silvanus, some located in elaborate carved niches.<sup>7</sup> The soldiers apparently belonged to a vexillation commanded by a centurion. It is not clear whether they provided labor themselves or whether they oversaw other laborers, probably slaves. If all of the large area now exposed was quarried in the Roman period, then a large labor force comprised of slaves seems likely. None of the inscriptions provide a date, but the second century A.D. is a likely time for such activity. Inscriptions attesting military involvement in quarrying activities are known elsewhere, including at Akoris in Middle Egypt, where a centurion of *legio III Cyrenaica* described himself as "in charge of the quarries of the city of Alexandria."<sup>8</sup>

### Investment

The first subject for consideration concerning state investment through army activities involves soldiers as builders. To what degree was the army involved in the construction of facilities used by the civilian population of the region or of roads and bridges of benefit to civilian economic activity?

4. See *ibid.*, 9–12.

5. *Ibid.*, 30; one of his examples is *AE* 1940, 44, a Hadrianic inscription recording the establishment of the boundaries of Aezani in Asia, *cura agente Saturnino primipilare*.

6. There are descriptions of and general comments on Arulis in F. Cumont, *Études syriennes*, 153–59, and Wagner, "Legio IIII Scythica in Zeugma am Euphrat," 517. See also M.A. Speidel, "Legio IIII Scythica, its Movements and Men," 176–79.

7. *CIL* III, 14396a–f; *IGLS* I, 67–81. Silvanus was an Italian deity associated with uncultivated land and human interference therein. The dedications probably were intended to propitiate him for the disturbance caused by the quarrying.

8. *IGRR* I, 1138 (Domitianic).

There is evidence for public buildings without a direct military function that might have been used by soldiers and civilians, such as temples and places of entertainment. As noted earlier, there is considerable evidence for army construction at Dura-Europos. Inscriptions attest to military construction of the middle phase of the *mithraeum* and an amphitheater by vexillations of *legiones IIII Scythica*, *XVI Flavia Firma*, and *III Cyrenaica* in the first two decades of the third century A.D.<sup>9</sup> However, the graffiti and the inscriptions of the *mithraeum* give no indication of civilian participation in the cult (as I demonstrated in chap. 4), and the amphitheater was so small that civilian use is unlikely. Probably it was for soldiers alone. The baths at Dura may have been built by soldiers and probably were for the use of soldiers, as I argued in chapter 1. It seems the building activities of the army at Dura were directed toward the needs of the army, rather than the needs of the civilian community.

This is probably true of military construction at the legionary bases of Samosata and Zeugma too. The evidence at Samosata consists of a few brick and tile stamps of *legio XVI Flavia Firma* and some *opus reticulatum* walling in the Urfa/Edessa gate in the lower city, below the tell.<sup>10</sup> The reticulate work is unusual for Syria, and it may be a technique imported by soldiers. The evidence from Zeugma consists of brick stamps of *legio IIII Scythica* from the site as identified by Wagner and others.<sup>11</sup> There is no reason to believe in either case that these materials were employed in any but military buildings, and in fact Wagner uses them to locate the military camp. Alternatively they may have been reused in later civilian buildings as *spolia*.

In 1959 MacMullen published a summary of the evidence for army construction in the Roman empire in the context of a general survey of public building.<sup>12</sup> He notes that most of this activity took place in the later second and early third centuries, and he cites the author of the *Life of Probus* in the *Historia Augusta*, who claims that Probus kept his soldiers in Egypt busy adding to the tithes of grain (hence perhaps

9. *Dura* 7/8, 85–87, no. 847; *Dura* 6, 77–80, no. 630.

10. For the stamps, see *CIL* III, 13615, 14165, *IGLS* I, 55. The reticulate construction work is discussed in app. A, below. Gregory (*Roman Military Architecture*, 2:127–28) suggests that it predates the Roman annexation of Cappadocia, the work of a Romanophile client king.

11. Wagner, *Seleukeia am Euphrat Zeugma*, 136–43; Kennedy, *The Twin Towns of Zeugma*, 133–35.

12. R. MacMullen, “Roman Imperial Building in the Provinces,” *HSCP* 64 (1959): 207–35, particularly 214–17.

building irrigation works?); building bridges, temples, porticoes, and basilicas; and draining marshes.<sup>13</sup> The *Historia Augusta* is often unreliable, but this claim suggests that such activity was not implausible. However, MacMullen's list of "civilian" projects with military involvement from the whole empire is rather short, and some of his examples are suspect. For example, he lists the amphitheater at Dura as one such project, yet this was almost certainly military in function. Likewise the temple of Jupiter Dolichenus at Köln may have been intended principally for military use, given the association of that god with soldiers. Bridges and walls, which also appear in his list, had a clear military function, and the number of structures listed with a primarily civilian function is very small. Hence it is difficult to say that military building was a particularly important form of "investment" in civilian communities. The use of specialist army surveyors, engineers, and craftsmen, which MacMullen also discusses, may have been more significant than the general use of soldiers to provide labor.<sup>14</sup> One piece of evidence from Syria implies the use of specialized technicians and perhaps relates to Gallus' soldiers and irrigation works. An inscription from Aini in the north of the province implies that personnel of *legio III Gallica* were involved in the construction of a *cochlia*, probably an Archimedes' screw for lifting water from the nearby Euphrates.<sup>15</sup> This seems to have been carried out at civic expense (*[d]e communi [impensa]*), so probably the army supplied technical expertise.

Construction of city walls was a task directly related to the needs of the army in addition to providing protection for the civilian community. Given the development of the fortress city from the later third century onward and the fact that both literary sources and inscriptions refer to the construction of walls "by" emperors, it is possible that the army played a part in building the defenses of civilian communities.

Otherwise, there are no epigraphic or literary references to the construction of walls by soldiers in the east, and there are only a few from elsewhere.<sup>16</sup> Again, the provision of a specialist military surveyor or engineer may have been more common than the large-scale use of soldiers'

13. Ibid., 217–19; *HA V. Probi*, 9.

14. MacMullen, "Roman Imperial Building," 214–16; cf. Pliny *Ep.* 10.42, 61, on military engineers.

15. *IGLS I*, 65–66 (= *AE* 1903, 255–66). See J.P. Oleson, *Greek and Roman Mechanical Water-Lifting Devices* (1984), 55–56.

16. See MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian*, 35–36 n. 44.

labor. There is evidence of this from Adraha in Arabia, where a series of inscriptions attest to the involvement of a *beneficiarius*, a *strator*, and an architect described as ἀπὸ στρ(ατείας) [on detached duty].<sup>17</sup> The Theodosian Code indicates that construction and repair of city walls was primarily a municipal responsibility in the fourth century. A rescript of Valentinian, Theodosius, and Arcadius in A.D. 396 addressed to the praetorian prefect of the Orient requests that he notify provincial governors that municipal senates and city inhabitants are responsible for constructing new walls and strengthening old walls.<sup>18</sup> The rescript goes on to indicate that the work was to be paid for with tax revenues, assessment of which related to assessment of the land tax. It is not clear if payment for the walls was an additional tax or if regular land-tax revenues were used, in which case the emperors effectively would have remitted part of the imperial revenues to be used for local defensive needs. Either way, the community paid for the walls, although in the latter case there would have been a form of imperial “investment” in work that aided in the defense of a community as well as the empire as a whole. As I have noted in chapter 4, there is much evidence of private (including church) benefaction in the provision of fortifications in later Roman Syria.

The army also was involved in construction of roads, bridges, canals, and harbor works. Four legionary vexillations and twenty cohorts were involved in cutting a canal near Antioch in A.D. 75, army and navy detachments cut a channel and built a barrage to divert silt-laden floodwaters away from the harbor at Seleucia Pieria, and soldiers undertook construction in the same harbor in the reign of Diocletian.<sup>19</sup> These works were probably undertaken to maintain the important logistical link between the Mediterranean and the eastern frontier. They undoubtedly made civilian trade easier too, but benefits to civilians were probably incidental rather than intended.

In marked contrast is the use of civilian labor to build a canal from the River Orontes to the foot of Mount Amanus, to provide water for the activities of fullers and to divert floodwater. This is described in a pair of inscriptions from Antioch that record that this work too was carried out under the supervision of the imperial legate M. Ulpianus Traianus, who had

17. H-G. Pflaum, “La Fortification de la ville d’Adraha d’Arabie,” *Syria* 29 (1952): 307–30.

18. *C.Th.* 15.1.34. (A.D. 396).

19. See van Berchem, “Le Port de Séleucie de Piérie,” 85–87, app. 4; 53–59, app. 3. For Diocletian, see Libanius *Or.* 20.18–20.

supervised the military canal cutting, but that the labor was provided by the city quarters as a liturgy.<sup>20</sup> The civilian character of the work is paralleled by the civilian composition of the workforce.

Construction of roads and bridges also was undertaken primarily to enable the army to move itself and supplies efficiently, but it incidentally speeded civilian movement and trade. The extensive road network of the region was clarified most of all by the aerial survey work of Poidebard and Stein. Not all of it was originally built in the Roman period, but there is plenty of evidence for Roman involvement in construction and maintenance. For example, the legate M. Ulpus Traianus, who oversaw the canal building at Antioch, supervised the construction of a road from Palmyra to Resafa and thence to the military base of Sura on the Euphrates in A.D. 75.<sup>21</sup> There is no direct evidence of military labor in this project, but the use of Latin in the inscription for it may indicate that official involvement was more than just supervisory. Feissel contrasts the Latin inscription of the military canal building at Antioch under M. Ulpus Traianus with the Greek inscription of civic canal building under the same legate, and perhaps the language difference is because the former was an official project with army involvement while the latter was a civic project with official approval.<sup>22</sup> Inscriptions in the Wadi Barada between Damascus and Heliopolis indicate that the road had been broken by the violence of the wadi and that soldiers of *legio XVI Flavia Firma* had repaired it by tunneling into the mountain, but at the expense of the community of Abilene.<sup>23</sup> Other road construction and repair in the Roman east was undertaken by civilians alone.<sup>24</sup> Bridges, too, formed an important element of the road network, and a particularly good example of military bridge building from Syria is the bridge over the Karasu that carried the road from Zeugma to Samosata. This appears to have been built by legionaries of *legio III Scythica* in the Severan period, and bricks with legionary stamps were used in its structure.<sup>25</sup> By the fourth century the repair of bridges and roads seems to have been primarily a civilian responsibility. Several

20. D. Feissel, "Deux Listes de quartiers d'Antioche astreintes au creusement d'un canal (73–74 après J-C)," *Syria* 62 (1985): 77–103 (= AE 1986, 694a, b).

21. See AE 1933, 205.

22. Feissel, "Deux listes," 85.

23. *CIL* III, 199, 200, 201.

24. See Isaac, *Limits*, 294.

25. See Wagner, "Legio III Scythica," 529.

rescripts in the Theodosian Code emphasize that no one was exempt from this duty.<sup>26</sup>

Thus there is a great deal of evidence for involvement of the Roman army in construction in Syria. However, this was hardly state “investment” in the province. Firstly, the army hardly ever seems to have built anything purely for civilian use. Most examples of “civilian”-type buildings, such as baths and temples, built by the army appear to have been for army use. Secondly, most of the things the army did build were built primarily for military reasons. Hence army involvement in building city walls was motivated by emperors’ needs to defend the empire as a whole, and harbor, bridge, and road works were done to maintain the army’s ability to move to threatened areas swiftly and to supply large armies needed for major campaigns against the Persians. All of these things were of incidental benefit to civilians and the civilian economy too. Finally, even things built primarily to meet military requirements often were built by civilians rather than by soldiers or were at least paid for or maintained by civilians, especially in the later empire.

The second form of “investment” to be considered is the economic aspect of veteran settlement. Savings and bonuses of veterans often are suggested as a source of capital for agricultural developments in frontier areas, particularly for such forms of agriculture as intensive olive cultivation and irrigated farming, which required injection of money, labor, time, or all three.<sup>27</sup> There is evidence from the region that veterans settled in agriculturally marginal areas requiring such investment. For example, a papyrus from Dura records the purchase of a vineyard in an irrigated area by an auxiliary veteran, and Tchalenko suggests that veterans who lived in the limestone massif were involved in the changes of landownership and exploitation that occurred there.<sup>28</sup> However, the few inscriptions from the limestone massif that refer or appear to refer to veterans come from the inland plains of the region rather than the mountains and,

26. *C.Th.* 15.3.3 (A.D. 387), 4 (A.D. 399), 5 (A.D. 412), 6 (A.D. 423).

27. See, e.g., Fentress, *Numidia and the Roman Army*, 177.

28. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 134–41, no. 26 (reference to one of the boundaries of the property being formed by κανάλιν ὕδατος [water channel]); Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 1:382 (general remark), 1:140 (an inscription of a veteran of Pannonian origin, Valerius Romullus; dated to A.D. 310), 1:190 (= *CIL* III, 191; an inscription of T. Flavius Julianus from Qatoura near Beroea; probably late second century); 3:3–4, no. 1 (an inscription of [.] Valerius Celer, from Brad; probably early second century; he is described as στ[---], which may stand for στρατιώτης, στάτωρ, or στράτωρ). Tchalenko suggests that other Latin names known in the area may have belonged to veterans.

with one exception, are datable to the second century A.D. They relate to Tchalenko's second phase of land use, the period when villa estates were owned by large proprietors and there was some modest olive cultivation, rather than the period of intensive olive oil production and expansion into the mountains in the later empire. Furthermore, in his restudy of Tchalenko's evidence, Tate draws attention to the homogeneous character of settlement in the region, casting doubts on his predecessor's recognition of a distinct class of more substantial, veteran-owned "vilas."<sup>29</sup> He relates development of olive oil production to the increased wealth of free peasant farmers and does not see any evidence of large-scale injection of veterans' capital. There is, however, considerable evidence of veteran settlement in areas of southern Syria and northern Arabia, such as the Djebel Hauran, some of it in places that were also marginal agriculturally, and their wealth may have been more significant. Likewise the sheer concentration of veterans settled in Berytus in the Augustan period makes it likely that they had an economic impact as marked as their cultural impact.

Thus epigraphic and papyrological evidence from the region suggests that some veterans settled in marginal areas where they might have provided capital to improve the productivity of the land. In addition, most of the known veterans who settled in the region appear to have been relatively wealthy individuals. In inscriptions and papyri, they appear as landowners and purchasers of land, civic benefactors, and important (and presumably wealthy) citizens of Libanius' Antioch. Of course, it is possible that poorer veterans are not represented in the evidence available, but at least some veterans were wealthy. Veterans were granted abandoned land in frontier areas (which in the eastern provinces often were agriculturally marginal too) from the third century A.D. onward, and the Theodosian Code shows that agriculture was a common choice of occupation for ex-soldiers. For example, a rescript of Constantine gives exemption of taxes to veterans farming abandoned lands, twenty-five thousand *folles* in cash to buy equipment, a yoke of oxen, and a hundred *modii* of seed grain.<sup>30</sup>

Objections to the idea that veteran settlement was significant in the agricultural development of the region center around the likely numbers

29. Tate, *Campaignes*.

30. *C.Th.* 7.20.3.1 (A.D. 326).

of such veterans and their significance in the total agricultural population. In response to Fentress' suggestion that veteran settlement was significant in agricultural change in Roman Numidia, Shaw argued that demographic factors limited the number of veterans who survived to settle in the countryside.<sup>31</sup> Given the greater concentration of troops in Syria and Mesopotamia than in Numidia, this argument may be weaker when applied to that region. The imperial rescript previously mentioned indicates that not all veterans became farmers. For example, there is reference to a tax exemption of one hundred *folles* for veterans who wish to engage in business (*negotium*).<sup>32</sup> This is a very small amount compared to the incentives for farmers, and it seems that the imperial government encouraged ex-soldiers to own and cultivate land. This probably related to concern over future military recruitment rather than to agricultural development; veterans' land grants depended on their sons serving in the army.<sup>33</sup> In all, it seems individual veterans were involved in the processes of agricultural change on the eastern frontier. However, the scale on which such changes took place and the relatively small number of known veterans suggest that they may not have been a primary cause of change. None of the changes that did take place, such as intensification of olive oil cultivation and extension of irrigated cultivation, were beyond the capabilities of the local civilian population, given appropriate incentives. This seems to have been the case in the limestone massif, despite Tchalenko's assertions about the role of veterans.

### Conclusions

The balance between exploitation and "investment" in Syria and Mesopotamia by the imperial government appears to come down on the side of exploitation. For in addition to the exactions of taxation and the immediate demands of the army, there was direct removal of natural resources under imperial control. The army did participate in building, but largely for its own benefit and often at civilian expense. However, some of the work, such as harbor and road building, intended to provide a transportation network for supplying the army, incidentally worked to the

31. Fentress, *Numidia and the Roman Army*, 150–60; Shaw, "Soldiers and Society," 138–41.

32. *C.Th.* 7.20.3.2 (A.D. 326).

33. See Mann, *Legionary Recruitment*, 65–67.

advantage of the civilian economy. Finally veterans, recipients of pay, donatives, and privileges from the central government, did make use of these resources in economic activity, such as agricultural production, on their retirement. However, it is far from proven that the scale of such “injections of capital” were sufficient to have had a significant impact on the regional economy as a whole.

## General Conclusions

In summing up this study, it is clear that there are no simple, definitive conclusions, and the evidence is far from comprehensive. However, it has been possible to consider a number of important themes.

The first was that of the relationship between army and cities. Attention has been drawn to the repeated assertions of ancient authors that there was an important relationship between soldiers and cities in Roman Syria and Mesopotamia. Furthermore, archaeological and documentary evidence, while not always open to simple interpretation, shows the importance of such links. It has been possible to look at a few of these urban sites in more detail and get a working idea of the physical relationship between the legionary bases of the Principate and the cities “at” which they were said to be. It seems likely that these fortresses were based next to the preexisting civilian community. In one rather different case, that of Dura-Europos, it was possible to view the close spatial relationship between military and civilian activities in some detail. For the later empire, it has been possible to examine the ancient literary contention that many fortress cities in the region were founded and developed in a deliberate manner to suit defensive requirements but were intended to be civilian communities too. This pattern of urban development as de facto military colonization seems to be borne out by the archaeological evidence from Dibli Faraj.

The next issue examined was the nature of the cultural, social, and economic relationship between civilians and soldiers. Often the army was obviously intrusive in the communities among which it lived. The presence of foreign troops brought in from other parts of the Roman world ensured that. We can see such “outsiders” at, for example, the fortress of *legio II Parthica* at Apamea in the third century A.D. We see a common thread of oppressive military duties and privileges and even criminal behavior from the reign of Domitian to the Syriac accounts of the wars in the reign of Anastasius. However, even when we find

evidence that physical proximity of soldiers and civilians is echoed in similarity of ethnic backgrounds, there is still, in part, separation of army and civilian. This separation derives from institutional identity rather than literal foreignness, yet the perception of soldiers as “cultural outsiders” may have been just as strong. Most of our evidence is from Dura-Europos, and we must be cautious about excessive generalization from a site that was under Roman control for less than a century. Obviously integration did take place to some degree in Syria as elsewhere in the Roman empire, not least in the cities of northern Syria, where the Roman military presence lasted longest, and from where we have the least detailed evidence. However, this study has shown the importance of social, economic, and cultural separation of soldiers and civilians in some contexts, and this serves as a salutary counterweight to the long-standing assumption that integration was the norm and a key factor in processes of cultural change, such as “romanization.”

Examining the regional economy from the army’s point of view has also proved productive. Whatever the weaknesses of Hopkins’ model of the Roman economy, it has proved effective for articulating varied evidence and highlighting the many gaps and uncertainties in it. A general conclusion drawn from this study must tend to highlight the depressing and exploitative character of the army’s economic needs, in contrast to some of the themes of stimulation and development led by tax and army pay implied by Hopkins’ model.

The third theme addressed was Millar’s concept of identity and ethnicity. The study of the social, cultural, and economic character of the Roman army in parts 1 and 2 suggests that another form of identity, institutional identity, is very important, cutting across and even superceding ethnic identities. We must beware of assuming that the emphasis on ethnicity as a primary form of self-identification that we see in modern contexts was equally important in the Roman empire. In a world that was implicitly multicultural, the ties of political and legal status and institutional affiliation may have been much more significant in shaping personal and group identities.

Another stated aim of this book was to highlight and structure areas for future consideration and research and to point out major gaps in our evidence for the topic under examination. This study has revealed the existence of many such gaps.

First of all, the acquisition of important new literary and documentary evidence specifically relating to Syria and Mesopotamia is likely to be

fairly limited and based on chance discoveries. Thus the most useful historical approaches to these topics are likely to be comparative, relating the evidence from Syria and Mesopotamia to that from other parts of the Roman empire, and looking at issues of regional diversity or empire-wide homogeneity in taxation, army supply, and urbanization and at the general issue of soldier-civilian relationships.<sup>1</sup> Comparative study should also go beyond the Greco-Roman world, to look at army-civilian relationships in other imperial contexts. In general, new theoretical approaches to colonial and postcolonial societies have much to offer.

There is also much scope for further archaeological study relevant to this topic, despite the expense and political difficulties.<sup>2</sup> The contributions of recent fieldwork and restudy projects (at Dura-Europos, the limestone massif of northern Syria, and the Hauran, to name a few places) have been tremendously important, and the potential of the work undertaken at Zeugma and Berytus/Beirut is equally great.

One area of archaeological study particularly relevant to the issues in this book is the field of Roman urbanization. A program of intensive surface survey, geophysical investigation, and sample excavation would benefit many of the sites discussed in this volume, notwithstanding the difficulties of conducting such work on extremely large and artifact-rich sites. Apart from producing evidence for the physical relationship of civilians and soldiers at these centers, such work would produce more evidence for the issues of army supply (pottery, building materials, etc.) and military coin use and would enable researchers to undertake synthetic regional studies similar to those already possible in northwest Europe. It might also be possible to examine the issue of whether distinctive material cultures correlate to military and civilian communities with a much greater level of resolution than is feasible now.

The study of the regional economy in part 3 of this book showed the importance of regional field survey projects, and more would obviously be valuable. The study of marginal zones (such as the Hauran and the Arabian frontier) is important, as these provide relatively clear indices for economic expansion and contraction and often were areas with a significant military presence. However, intensive survey in less marginal areas,

1. Alston's *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt* forms a good basis for starting such a comparative study.

2. While the discovery of new documentary evidence is not and should not be a specific aim of archaeological fieldwork, it is an area in which new documentary evidence (inscriptions, papyri, etc.) is most likely to come to light.

perhaps the territory of one of the major urban centers, is also important to avoid overstating the importance and representative nature of the margins. The French restudy projects based in the limestone massif have also shown the importance of reevaluation of older projects. An important starting point would be the full publication of the excavations at Dibsi Faraj, surely to come as one of the next of Richard Harper's impressive publications. The regional economy portion of this book has also shown lacunae in the study of traded commodities, such as pottery and glass. Certainly, more basic work needs to be done on the location of production sites, characterization, and comparison of excavated and published material from the east with material from elsewhere in the Roman empire. Until recently the emphasis on local artifact studies in the east has tended to mean that such comparanda, and hence evidence for empire-wide trade, have been missed. In addition to this basic work, there is much scope for synthetic studies of the production and distribution of, for example, Eastern Sigillata A and eastern amphoras, as well as for analysis of their role in the wider eastern Mediterranean and Roman world. Again, work at Berytus/Beirut holds particular promise.

Millar was right to suggest that it is impossible to write a definitive study of the relationship between soldiers and cities or a definitive social and economic history of the Roman Near East. However, it is possible to set out and structure the evidence that is currently available and to frame questions and hence to shape the research and the evidence to come. If this is achieved, then perhaps we can be forgiven for attempting (but failing) to achieve the impossible.

## Appendices



## APPENDIX A

### Catalogue of Sites from the Principate Mentioned in the Main Text

#### Legions and Auxilia in Towns and Cities in the Early and Middle Empire

##### Zeugma (fig. 2)

Seleucia on the Euphrates and its twin, Apamea on the Euphrates (east of the river), were founded by Seleucus I Nicator, probably ca. 300–299 B.C., their clear function being the defense of a bridge linking Syria with Mesopotamia.<sup>1</sup> There are scattered references to a legionary base located in or near the city of Seleucia, by then known by the name *Zeugma*, throughout the first century A.D.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that *legio X Fretensis* moved from Cyrrhus to Zeugma in A.D. 18, but the earliest specific reference to a military base there concerns A.D. 49, when Tacitus referred to *positis castris apud Zeugma* [a camp situated at Zeugma].<sup>3</sup> However, this refers to temporary encampment of a large Roman army rather than to a permanent legionary base. Josephus states that *legio X Fretensis* moved to Judaea in A.D. 66 from a base on the Euphrates, perhaps Zeugma.<sup>4</sup> Ptolemy's *Geography* in the second century A.D. lists Zeugma as a city but not a legionary base.<sup>5</sup>

Otherwise, we must rely on recent epigraphic and archaeological

1. See Grainger, *Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 50–51.

2. Plutarch *Crassus* 19.3 indicates that Crassus used the bridge at Zeugma to cross to his defeat at Carrhae. Cicero *Ad Fam.* 2.17.3 refers to a garrison at Apamea, perhaps Apamea ad Euphratem, in 50 B.C. Strabo 16.2.3 describes Zeugma as a φρούριον, “garrison” or “fort,” presumably in referring to its status in his own day.

3. Tac. *Ann.* 12.12.3.

4. Josephus *BJ* 7.17.

5. Ptolemy notes the legions at Raphanaea and Samosata, for a total of only two legions in Syria. Probably there were three legions in Syria then, so his failure to record a camp at Zeugma may be an oversight or textual problem.

evidence, studied in Wagner's monograph.<sup>6</sup> Two important issues are considered in this volume. The first, fundamental problem is location of the site of Zeugma, identified with modern Birecik, Belkis, or alternatively a site on the east bank of the Euphrates opposite Samosata.<sup>7</sup> Wagner reevaluates the evidence for the location of Zeugma and concludes that the city was located near modern Belkis, a conclusion reached first by Franz Cumont in 1917.<sup>8</sup> He presents results of a surface survey of the site, recording standing remains and larger finds, such as sculpture and epigraphic material. The results of this work are summarized in a plan of the site that delineates the broad limits of the Hellenistic city and its Roman extension and that indicates topographic features, such as the probable acropolis, Belkis Tepe, and a wall that may divide Hellenistic and Roman portions of the city and hence may be the Hellenistic city wall outgrown by the Roman settlement.<sup>9</sup>

The second problem is the archaeological evidence for the location and nature of the legionary camp at Zeugma. Wagner's evidence consists of a group of seven stamped tiles found in the area of Roman occupation, six of which bear references to *legio IIII Scythica*, while the seventh is stamped *legionis*.<sup>10</sup> He dates these to the late second century through the early third century A.D.<sup>11</sup> He also found military gravestones at Belkis—one of a *duplicarius* of *legio IIII Scythica* and others of, respectively, a soldier of *legio I Adiutrix*, an individual of *II Adiutrix*, and a *duplicarius* of *X Gemina Pia Fidelis*.<sup>12</sup> These last three legions were based in Pannonia, and the gravestones probably date to the Parthian wars of Septimius Severus or Caracalla.<sup>13</sup> They were found reused in the modern village of Belkis and in local museums, but they were said to have come from the west necropolis on the outskirts of the Roman extension of the city.<sup>14</sup>

6. Wagner, *Seleukeia am Euphrat Zeugma*; and see his "Legio IIII Scythica." There is also a discussion of the site in Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 2:129–31; and there is a useful summary of the visible remains in Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey*, 4:152–56.

7. The evidence is discussed at some length in Wagner, *Seleukeia am Euphrat Zeugma*, 39–56.

8. F. Cumont, *Études syriennes* (1917), 119–42.

9. Wagner, *Seleukeia am Euphrat Zeugma*, plan II.

10. Ibid., 136–43, no. 5, tiles 1–7.

11. Ibid., 142–43.

12. Ibid., 135–36, no. 4; 132–33, no. 1; 133–34, no. 2; 134–35, no. 3.

13. See ibid. Also see the review of that book by M.P. Speidel in *Gnomon* 51 (1979): 614–15.

14. A further funerary monument published by Wagner (*Seleukeia am Euphrat Zeugma*, 135–36) has been recognized recently as belonging to a soldier (a *librarius*); see M.P. Speidel, "A Soldier of *Legio IIII Scythica* from Zeugma," in *The Twin Towns of*

On the basis of this evidence, Wagner claims to have found the permanent camp of *legio IIII Scythica*. He suggests it was located where he found his stamped tiles west of the supposed Hellenistic wall, in an area of Roman settlement. He dates civilian occupation of this part of the site to the second century A.D. (roughly contemporary with the legionary tile stamps) on the basis of mosaics there and tombstones on the edge of the Roman civilian settlement. He further suggests that the civilian settlement in this part of the city developed around the legionary camp there.<sup>15</sup>

Wagner's location of the legionary camp is thus based on very limited evidence.<sup>16</sup> Legionary tile stamps found there perhaps relate to a detachment deployed to guard the bridge across the Euphrates or to some other form of military construction work rather than the fortress. Legionary brick and tile stamps are also found in Roman bridges in the area.<sup>17</sup> Alternatively tiles may have been reused in civilian building.

A great deal of archaeological work has been done at Belkis recently, as the area is scheduled to be flooded by a nearby dam. This work has not produced conclusive evidence regarding the location of the legionary fortress, but it has brought forth new evidence, discussion, and modification of Wagner's conclusions.<sup>18</sup> The recent work includes new finds of legionary stamped tiles and excavation of a sequence of two successive mud-brick forts of 11–12 hectares, dating to the first half of the first century A.D., east of the modern village of Belkis.<sup>19</sup> They are probably too

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*Zeugma on the Euphrates: Rescue Work and Historical Studies*, ed. D. Kennedy (1998), 203–4.

15. Dating of the civilian settlement is summarized in Wagner, *Seleukeia am Euphrat Zeugma*, 283; *canabae* are discussed in idem, "Legio IIII Scythica," 526–27.

16. Gregory (*Roman Military Architecture*, 1:131) is skeptical about this evidence, mentioning the uneven terrain on that part of the site, which makes it, perhaps, a less likely place for a Roman military base.

17. See Wagner, "Legio IIII Scythica," 521.

18. Kennedy's *The Twin Towns of Zeugma* not only includes new archaeological work but also a study of the history of the site and a thorough catalogue of the sources. See also Algaze et al., "The Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project: A Preliminary Report," 206–7; Algaze, Breuninger, and Knudstad, "The Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project: Final Report," 1–96; C. Abadie-Reynal et al., "Mission archéologique de Zeugma: Rapport sur la campagne de prospection 1995," *Anatolia Antiqua* 4 (1996): 311–24.

19. For the tiles: see D. Kennedy (with D. French) "Tile Stamps of *Legio IIII Scythica*," in *The Twin Towns of Zeugma on the Euphrates: Rescue Work and Historical Studies*, ed. D. Kennedy (1998), 133–35; M.A. Speidel, "*Legio IIII Scythica*, its Movements and Men," 167–68; Algaze, Breuninger, and Knudstad, "The Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project: Final Report," 20. For the forts: see M.A. Speidel, "*Legio IIII Scythica*, its Movements and Men," 168.

small and short-lived for a legionary fortress, but a number of other suggestions support or disagree with Wagner's proposal for its location. Gregory prefers a bridgehead site across from Zeugma at Apamea, across the Euphrates, technically in Persian territory.<sup>20</sup> Kennedy weighs up the merits of Wagner's site, a bridgehead site, or one to the east of the ancient city, on flat ground near modern Belkis.<sup>21</sup> M.A. Speidel prefers the flat area near Belkis and the excavated forts.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps the Roman camp was located at one of these sites beyond the Hellenistic city walls, or perhaps part of the city was taken over by the army during the second century A.D. and converted to military use, as at Dura-Europos. There is no decisive evidence, but in either case, there was a close topographical relationship between the city and legionary base. Gravestones of members of Pannonian legions suggest that the city was also a place of transit for units en route to Parthian territory, like Apamea on the Orontes.

Wagner cites other evidence for the deployment and activities of *legio IIII Scythica* in and around Zeugma/Belkis. He suggests that a capricorn on late second-century to early third-century coins of Zeugma was a symbol of that legion, raised in the reign of Augustus, who used it as a personal badge. Wagner notes a parallel with the coinage of Samosata and *legio XVI Flavia Firma*.<sup>23</sup> He also presents evidence for *legio IIII Scythica*'s activities at the stone quarries of nearby Arulis (modern Ehnes) and construction of bridges in the area.<sup>24</sup>

Wagner supplies little new chronological information for the occupation of the Zeugma fortress. He suggests that *IIII Scythica* replaced *X Fretensis* at Zeugma in A.D. 66, assuming that Josephus (*BJ*. 7.1.3) refers to Zeugma and that *IIII Scythica* replaced *X Fretensis* there immediately.<sup>25</sup> The epigraphic evidence provides only a *terminus ante quem* of the late second century. The level and nature of the late military presence at Zeugma is disputed. Kennedy suggests that all or part of *IIII Scythica* moved elsewhere in the later second century, while M.A. Speidel (with Wagner) argues for its continued importance, with at least part of *IIII*

20. Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 1:202, 2:131.

21. Kennedy, *The Twin Towns of Zeugma*, 37.

22. In *ibid.*, 168.

23. Wagner, "Legio IIII Scythica," 529–32.

24. *Ibid.* 517 (Arulis), 521 (bridges). See also M.A. Speidel, "Legio IIII Scythica, its Movements and Men," 174, 176–79.

25. Josephus *BJ* 7.17.

*Scythica* in residence, as late as A.D. 252 or beyond. The town was attacked by Sapor I in A.D. 252 and hence may have been a military center then, although not all such sites listed in the *Res Gestae* of Sapor necessarily had permanent garrisons.<sup>26</sup> Zeugma perhaps declined thereafter, but it remained an obvious crossing point and hence a place of transit for troops.<sup>27</sup> Procopius (*Buildings* 2.9.18–20) records that its walls were rebuilt by Justinian.

### Cyrrhus

There is one secure literary reference to Cyrrhus as a legionary base. Tacitus indicates that in A.D. 18 Germanicus and Cn. Piso met there, at the *hiberna* (winter quarters) of *legio X Fretensis*.<sup>28</sup> The foundation date is unclear, although *Cyrrhus* is a Macedonian name, and thus perhaps the city is the site of a Macedonian colony.<sup>29</sup> Frézouls notes that the enceinte wall is mainly Byzantine but in places overlays Hellenistic polygonal work, and hence the Byzantine wall probably conforms to the Hellenistic layout.<sup>30</sup> The plan, with the citadel set off to one corner and walled off from the city, is usual for Seleucid colonies in Syria. There is no evidence for continuity of the wall circuit through the Roman period, and Frézouls suggests that Cyrrhus was unwalled then. At any rate, it seems that the Roman military base at Cyrrhus was preceded by Hellenistic military activity.

Archaeological work done on the site has revealed no evidence for the location of the legionary fortress, focusing instead on the theater of the second century A.D.<sup>31</sup> The fortress may have been within the walls or outside them.

The evidence for the Roman army from the site of Cyrrhus itself is

26. *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* (ed. Maricq), 14.

27. See Ammianus Marcellinus 18.18.1 (A.D. 359). M.P. Speidel ("A Cavalry Regiment from Orleans at Zeugma on the Euphrates: The *Equites Scutarii Aureliaci*," *ZPE* 27 (1977): 271–73) suggests the burial of a *comitatensis* officer at Zeugma in the mid-fourth century and hence continued military importance of the site.

28. Tac. *Ann.* 2.57.

29. See Frézouls, "Cyrrhus et la Cyrrhestique," on the Macedonian name and the possible military colony. Grainger (*Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 41) suggests that it was a foundation of Seleukos Nikator, although the earliest references to it refer to 285 B.C. (Plutarch *Dem. Poliocetes* 32, possibly anachronistic) and 221 B.C. (Polybius 5.50.7).

30. Frézouls, "Cyrrhus et la Cyrrhestique," 191.

31. Frézouls "Cyrrhus et la Cyrrhestique" provides the best summary of the history and archaeology of the site.

epigraphic and post-Tiberian.<sup>32</sup> The earliest inscription, *IGLS* I, 148, is the gravestone of a *signifier* of *legio [I] Ad(iutrix) p(iae) f(idelis)*, normally based in Pannonia. The editors suggest it is Trajanic, although the same unit appears in a later second-century context at Zeugma.

Also Trajanic is a dedication to Q. Marcius Turbo, prefect of the Misenum fleet, and later Hadrian's praetorian prefect. This inscription leads Frézouls to suggest that Cyrrhus was the point of concentration for Trajan's invasion of Armenia in A.D. 114, since it lay on a road route from Antioch to Euphrates crossings like Zeugma.<sup>33</sup> Sailors of the Misenum fleet are attested in large numbers at Seleucia Pieria, and logistical support of an eastern war is a likely reason for Turbo's presence. There is also a gravestone of a centurion of *legio III Gallica* (*IGLS* I, 149: [γ] γαλλ), which is difficult to date.

Finally, there is a group of gravestones relating to the Parthian wars of the third century. These are *IGLS* I, 150 (*CIL* III, 195), of an *imagineifer* of *VII Claudia* set up by a *miles* of *IIII Flavia*; *IGLS* I, 151 (*CIL* III, 194), of a *miles* of *VII Claudia*; and *IGLS* I, 152 (*CIL* III, 193), of a *miles* of *VIII Augusta*. These attest to the importance of Cyrrhus as a transit and assembly place rather than a permanent fortress, as only one, *IGLS* I, 149, refers to a legion in the permanent garrison of Syria. *I Adiutrix* was normally based in Pannonia, *VII Claudia* and *IIII Flavia* in Upper Moesia, and *VIII Augusta* in Upper Germany at this time. Cyrrhus was captured by Sapor in A.D. 252.<sup>34</sup> Cyrrhus also served as a military base in the sixth century.

### Apamea on the Orontes (fig. 3)

Apamea probably was founded by Seleucus Nicator ca. 301–299 B.C.<sup>35</sup> The site is clearly defensible, on a plateau with a detached citadel to the west. Strabo records it as a Seleucid arsenal, with royal military headquarters, stables, and elephants being located there.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, excava-

32. Isaac (*Limits*, 38) notes that *CIL* XVI, 42 is a diploma of A.D. 98 of a soldier born at Cyrrhus, probably the son of a soldier. Hence there may have been some military activity at Cyrrhus in the A.D. 50s.

33. E. Frézouls, "Inscription de Cyrrhus relative à Q. Marcius Turbo," *Syria* 30 (1953): 247–78. R. Syme ("The Wrong Marcius Turbo," 553–54) agrees with this identification.

34. See *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* (ed. Maricq), 15.

35. Grainger in *Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 58–59, discusses the evidence.

36. Strabo 16.2.10. Polybius 5.47.5f. provides evidence for its use as a military base in the 220s B.C.

tions have not revealed clear evidence of Hellenistic fortifications.<sup>37</sup> However, the Hellenistic military associations and its obviously defensible position suggest early fortification.

There are a number of historical references to Apamea as a Roman military camp. The first four are to events of 50–40 B.C.;<sup>38</sup> the next is to A.D. 218, when *legio II Parthica*, normally based at Albanum in Italy, made its winter quarters at Apamea.<sup>39</sup> Tacitus mentions that *legio VI Ferrata* had its winter quarters near Laodicea ad Mare in A.D. 19, and these may have been at Apamea.<sup>40</sup>

Apamea has been excavated extensively by a Belgian group currently under the direction of J-Ch. Balty, and his work has recently produced much evidence regarding the Roman army there. Most is epigraphic and can be added to military inscriptions recorded by earlier visitors.<sup>41</sup> In particular, the Belgian group discovered seventy-six inscriptions

37. Grainger (*Cities of Seleukid Syria*, 82–83) claims that two Belgian *sondages* produced evidence for the Hellenistic phase of the enceinte wall and that the Roman plan was based exactly on that of the Hellenistic period. The excavations were those of Mertens, published in “Sondages dans la grande colonnade et sur l’enceinte,” in *Colloque Apamée de Syrie: Bilan des recherches archéologiques 1965–1968*, ed. J. Balty, Fouilles d’Apamée de Syrie Miscellanea, no. 6 (1969), 61–71. His two cuts, through the fortifications and through the *cardo maximus*, produced evidence of two phases, the earlier with a *terminus ante quem* provided by a deposit banked up against the wall to its north. Pottery from that deposit (*ibid.*, 69, fig. 6) included Eastern Sigillata, with a general date of mid–first century B.C. to mid–first century A.D. The shapes illustrated include some from late in that period. Mertens notes the surprising absence of evidence for a Hellenistic phase. The *cardo maximus* excavation also did not show evidence of Hellenistic foundations. Figure 3 of the excavation report shows two paving levels of the street, the earliest sealing layers above sterile soil. One was a possible living surface with pottery published by Mertens (64), the latest datable material providing a *terminus post quem* for the lowest street level, and this perhaps is what Grainger refers to as foundations. This included Rhodian amphora handles and black-slipped wares that Mertens dates to the third–second centuries B.C. and substantial quantities of red-slipped ware that the excavator suggests is late first century A.D. at the earliest and hence the latest datable material. Mertens (67) suggests a date of mid–first century A.D. for the construction of the lowest level of street paving.

38. Cicero *Ad Fam.* 2.17.3 refers to the withdrawal of a Roman garrison from Apamea in 50 B.C., in the context of Parthian military activity. This may, however, have been Apamea on the Euphrates, opposite Zeugma (as in Shackleton-Bailey’s edition of *Ad Fam.* [1977], vol. 1, p. 458), closer to the Parthians east of the Euphrates.

Pompey’s adherent Caecilius Bassus used Apamea on the Orontes as a base and defended it successfully, with a garrison including two cohorts in 43–42 B.C. as part of a general local uprising. This is described at Strabo 16.2.10. Cassius Dio (47.27.1) also refers to this and to a subsequent failed assault on the city by Labienus (48.25).

39. Cassius Dio 78.34.2, 78.34.5.

40. Tac. *Ann.* 2.79.3. See also, Parker, *The Roman Legions*, 128.

41. *IGLS IV*, 1346, 1356–62, 1371, 1372, 1374, 1375.

apparently from the necropolis of the military camp, reused in the fabric of tower XV of the city's fortification wall.<sup>42</sup>

Most of these refer to the presence of *legio II Parthica* at Apamea on three separate occasions. The first was A.D. 215 to A.D. 218, when it participated in Caracalla's Persian war.<sup>43</sup> The legion probably remained in the east until shortly after Elagabalus' accession, then returned to Italy. Ten documents definitely refer to this period, when the legion bore the epithet *Antoniniana*.<sup>44</sup> One of them, the gravestone of a soldier who died at Aegeae in Cilicia, is particularly interesting. The soldier was buried at Catabolum on the road to Antioch, and his tombstone was found at Apamea.<sup>45</sup> This shows where the legion arrived in the east and its route to Apamea.<sup>46</sup> The second deployment to Apamea was in A.D. 231–33, for campaigns of Severus Alexander, when it bore the epithet *Severiana*. The majority of datable inscriptions come from that period. The third period was A.D. 242–44, under Gordian III, when the legion was known as *Gordiana*.<sup>47</sup> These inscriptions provide a detailed picture of the structure and composition of the legion.

There are references to other units too—inscriptions mentioning two Syrian legions, *III Gallica* and *IIII Scythica*; other legions (e.g., *legio XIII Gemina*, normally based in Pannonia, and *IIII Flavia*); and *XIV cohors urbana*.<sup>48</sup> IGLS IV, 1311 is the tombstone of a second-century *equus*

42. A selection has been published in Balty and van Rengen's *Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica* and in *AE* (especially 1993). Previously the evidence was presented and discussed in some detail in J.-Ch. Balty's "Apamée (1986)" and "Apamea in Syria in the Second and Third Centuries A.D.," 97–104, pls. xii–xv. A few other military inscriptions have been published in W. van Rengen, "Nouvelles Inscriptions grecques et latines," in *Colloque Apamée de Syrie: Bilan des recherches archéologiques 1965–1968*, ed. J. Balty, and *Apamée de Syrie: Bilan des recherches archéologiques 1969–1971*, ed. J. Balty and J.-Ch. Balty, *Fouilles d'Apamée de Syrie Miscellanea*, nos. 6–7 (Brussels, 1969–72), 95–102 and 97–112, respectively.

43. See Cassius Dio 78.13.3.

44. Balty, "Apamée (1986)," 219.

45. *Catabolum* is the Latin form of the Greek κατάβολον, meaning a small port or emporium. A post of the *cursus publicus* in Rome had the same name. Either association might be appropriate for a Roman army unit in transit.

46. See Balty, "Apamée (1986)," 219; Balty and van Rengen, *Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica*, 23 and pl. 2 (= *AE* 1993, 1572).

47. See Balty, "Apamea in Syria in the Second and Third Centuries A.D.," 100.

48. *Ibid.*, 103; For examples, see Balty and van Rengen, *Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica*, 27 and pl. 6 (*XIII Gemina*; = *AE* 1993, 1576, apparently the inscription previously published as IGLS IV, 1362); 29 and pl. 7 (*IIII Scythica*; = *AE* 1993, 1577); 30 and pl. 8 (= *AE* 1993, 1578). The last refers to a veteran of *IV Flavia* and thus does not in itself

*singularis*, perhaps accompanying the emperor on campaign. Hence the town seems to have served as a temporary camp or assembly/transit point for various units in the wars of the second and third centuries A.D.

Two and possibly three other inscriptions refer to a later phase of military activity. They include tombstones of a *decurio* of an *ala I Flavia Augusta Britannica* and a *signifer* of *ala I Ulpia Contariorum*, both from A.D. 252.<sup>49</sup> Many other, undated inscriptions refer to these two cavalry units, as, apparently, does IGLS IV, 1361, the epitaph of the *[str]ator p[r(aefecti)] alae Br[itta]nice*. Balty suggests that they are contemporary and connected with Syrian campaigns of Sapor I.<sup>50</sup> The *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* records the destruction of Apamea in the course of Sapor's second campaign.<sup>51</sup> One military inscription definitely postdates this destruction, and another possibly does. The first is IGLS IV, 1356, a Christian epitaph of one Asterios, tribune of a *νυμέρος Δακῶν* [*numerus* of Dacians], which the editors suggest may be the *ala I Ulpia Dacorum* (*Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 25: *dux Armeniae*) or the *cohors I Ulpia Dacorum* (Or. 32: *dux Syriae*), both attested in Syria earlier. The second is an inscription recording a soldier's career on his wife's sarcophagus.<sup>52</sup> It includes the title *protector*, not known elsewhere before the second half of the third century A.D.

Archaeological evidence for the location of a legionary camp or camps at Apamea is less decisive. However, a number of facts collected by Balty point toward a location.<sup>53</sup> Most tombstones were reused in one tower of the city circuit, suggesting that the military cemetery and perhaps the base were fairly close. A dedication to the eagle and standards of the Second Parthian Legion was built into another nearby tower, close to the first, which suggests that the chapel of the *principia* was nearby. Examination of an aerial photograph led Balty to believe that the camp was on a flat spur east of the city, overlooking a road entering the east gate. He notes rectangular structures faintly visible on the photograph and, perhaps, artificial leveling of the spur and terracing of its slopes. It is about the

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prove the presence of serving soldiers of that legion at Apamea. However, the editors also refer to another, unpublished inscription of *IV Flavia* from the site, apparently that of a serving soldier.

49. Balty, "Apamea in Syria in the Second and Third Centuries A.D.," 102; AE 1987, 955 is the inscription of the *signifer*.

50. Ibid.; Balty and van Rengen, *Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica*, 13–15, 46–53.

51. *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* (ed. Maricq), 13.

52. Van Rengen, "Nouvelles Inscriptions grecques et latines" (1972), 100–102, no. 2.

53. Balty, "Apamée de Syrie (1986)," 239–40.

same size as the known camp of *II Parthica* at Albanum in Italy. It lies only about five hundred meters from the gates on the east side of the city, and such proximity of a large concentration of troops must have had an impact on the daily life of the city. Evidence for the presence of other units for specific campaigns suggests that there may have been other, temporary camps nearby and that troops may have been billeted in houses within the city.

### Samosata (fig. 14)

Samosata (Samsat) probably was a city by the mid-second century B.C.<sup>54</sup> It was capital of the kingdom of Commagene until annexation in A.D. 72, metropolis thereafter.<sup>55</sup> Like Zeugma, Samosata was an important crossing place for the upper Euphrates, as Josephus indicates in discussing Roman motives for annexation.<sup>56</sup> There is even less evidence for the history of the Roman legionary presence than for the sites previously discussed. Josephus mentions that the governor of Syria annexed Commagene with *legio VI Ferrata* and that a detachment occupied Samosata.<sup>57</sup> Probably part or all of that legion remained for some time before its redeployment to Judaea in A.D. 132–34. Ptolemy refers to a legionary camp of the “Flavian” legion, *XVI Flavia Firma*, at Samosata in the mid-second century A.D.<sup>58</sup> A career inscription of L. Fabius Cilo notes he was legate of *XVI Flavia Firma* at Samosata.<sup>59</sup> He was consul in A.D. 193, so it is likely that the legion was there by about A.D. 180 at the latest and perhaps immediately after *VI Ferrata*.<sup>60</sup>

Evidence from Samosata itself includes an inscribed *cippus* of a *m(iles)* of *legio XVI F F*, another mentioning a *miles* of *legio IIII SC*, and tile stamps of *legio XVI Flavia Firma*, probably the regular garrison of the city in the second century.<sup>61</sup> None of these inscriptions are securely dated.

Plans and photographs from recent archaeological investigations show a large tell north of the Euphrates, with remains of ancient wall enclosures below it, extending north and west of the mound, a total area of

54. See Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, 264.

55. See Josephus *BJ* 7.224.

56. *Ibid.*

57. Josephus *BJ* 7.225, 230.

58. Ptolemy *Geography* 5.14.8: Σαμόσατα λεγίων Φλαυία.

59. *CIL* VI, 1409, line 11.

60. See *PIR*<sup>2</sup> III, Fabius 27.

61. *IGLS* I, 53, 57 (*CIL* III 6048); *CIL* III, 13615, 14165 (cf. *IGLS* I, 55).

some eighty hectares.<sup>62</sup> The ancient course of the Euphrates probably ran close to the eastern limits of the site. Goell's excavations on the tell focused mainly on the Islamic fortress, although it is clear that occupation dated to before the Hellenistic period and that there were Roman and Byzantine levels too.<sup>63</sup> Subsequently Goell investigated remains of wall enclosures below the tell. An interesting feature of these is the *opus reticulatum* facing in the lower wall courses, as this technique is rare in the eastern empire.<sup>64</sup> There are also what is described as *opus mixtum* faced walling (a second-century A.D. technique in Italy) west of the city and sporadic traces of rubble and lime mortar walls elsewhere on the site. There is evidence of an inner enclosure wall and also an outer one on the western side of the city. Serdaroglu suggests that the outer was built to accommodate urban expansion, while Goell suggests that it was Roman and that the inner wall was late Byzantine, implying a contraction of the city.<sup>65</sup>

The location of the legionary camp is not certain and is not discussed by archaeologists who have worked there. Possibly it stood at the northern limit of the ancient site, north of the tell. This site stands on a modern road to a ferry site, and it would have been much closer to the Euphrates in antiquity, perhaps controlling an ancient crossing point. This possible location is outside the inner circuit wall of the city, but there are no clear remains of the outer wall in this part of the city. Thus it is not clear how a camp in this location stood in relation to early Roman walls—whether enclosed by them or in a separate enclosure adjacent to them.

In summary, it is clear that Samosata was an urban center of some size and importance prior to the Roman annexation of Commagene and that a legionary camp was established in or near the city, probably in A.D. 72. Evidence regarding the location or the nature of the camp is limited, but it

62. Goell, "Samosata Archaeological Excavations"; Serdaroglu, *Surveys in the Lower Euphrates Basin*, 1974; Özdogan, *Lower Euphrates Basin 1977 Survey*. There is a discussion in Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 2:124–28; Sinclair, in *Eastern Turkey*, 4:144–48, provides a brief description.

63. Goell, "Samosata Archaeological Excavations," 92–102.

64. There is a photograph in Goell, "Samosata Archaeological Excavations," 103, fig. 9. Gregory (*Roman Military Architecture*, 1:113, 2:127–28) points out the extreme rarity of *opus reticulatum* in the Roman east and the fact that in Italy it generally dates to fifty years or so before the annexation of Cappadocia. She suggests that it was the product of a Romanophile local ruler before Roman annexation.

65. See the general description in Goell, "Samosata Archaeological Excavations," 102–5; discussion of the expansion of the city in Serdaroglu, *Surveys in the Lower Euphrates Basin*, 1974, 67.

may have been adjacent to the northern edge of the civilian settlement. Most of the site was flooded by recent dam construction.

### Raphanaea

Unlike other legionary bases discussed, Raphanaea (modern Rafniye), the southern legionary base of Syria in the Principate, apparently was not established at an existing city. Jones suggests that it was a local tribal capital, which grew in size and status because of the Roman army presence.<sup>66</sup> In this area, lacking established Greco-Macedonian cities, civilian settlement may have grown around a military base as did many cities in the western provinces.

Josephus indicates that Raphanaea was the base of *legio XII Fulminata* during Tiberius' reign.<sup>67</sup> This legion was redeployed during the Jewish revolt of A.D. 66. A tombstone from Rafniye belonged to the wife of a military tribune of *legio VI Ferrata*, perhaps based there between its stay at Samosata and its redeployment to Judaea during the revolt of A.D. 132.<sup>68</sup> For the rest of the second century A.D., *III Gallica* was based at Raphanaea, as shown by Ptolemy and by a fragmentary marble altar from Rafniye bearing the inscription *P[ro salute N. et N.] Augustorum et victoria leg(io) III Gall(ica)* and a relief of a victory and an eagle flying over a bull.<sup>69</sup> In addition, there are numerous second-century inscriptions showing detachments of that legion under centurions from around Phaena in southern Syria, probably outposted from Raphanaea.<sup>70</sup> Presumably the large force of troops near Emesa that revolted in favor of Elagabalus in A.D. 219 was *III Gallica* at nearby Raphanaea.<sup>71</sup> Its name was erased from many inscriptions because of its support for Elagabalus.

Mouterde provides a brief description of the site, mentioning a field of ruins with a small tell. He suggests that the legionary camp was on the tell or on low ground near a spring, contrasting its location with that of a medieval castle on high ground nearby.<sup>72</sup>

66. Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, 267.

67. Josephus BJ 7.17.

68. *IGLS* IV, 1400.

69. Ptolemy 5.14.12; Ῥαφανέαι λεγίων τρίτη; *IGLS* IV, 1399.

70. *IGRR* III, 1113–16, 1120. There are also four referring to *XVI Flavia Firma* (*IGRR* III, 1117–18, 1121–22).

71. See Herodian 5.3.9.

72. Mouterde, "À travers l'Apamène," 37–42.

### Dura-Europos and the City Garrisons of the Middle Euphrates

#### Dura-Europos (fig. 6)

Dura-Europos is discussed in detail in the introduction and chapter 1.

#### Ana

Ana/Anath lay in the Euphrates on an island of ca. nineteen hectares called Qal'a, opposite the modern town of Ana.<sup>73</sup> There is archaeological evidence of Neo-Assyrian settlement but no archaeological or historical evidence of Hellenistic settlement. The salvage excavations in 1981–82 were stratigraphic surroundings rather than area excavation, so the topography of the site in the Parthian to Sassanian periods is unclear. There is no specific archaeological evidence of a Roman or Palmyrene military garrison, although its existence may be inferred from inscriptions showing Palmyrene troops there. One was found at Palmyra and refers to a Nabataean cavalymen at Ana in A.D. 132, before the arrival of Roman forces on the middle Euphrates.<sup>74</sup> The other is later in date, late second or early third century, referring to a *strategos* at Ana and Gamla.<sup>75</sup> Palmyrene troops in the later inscription may have been under Roman control, like the Palmyrene archers and *strategos* at Dura-Europos in the early Roman period. The evidence suggests a Parthian civilian settlement and a Palmyrene garrison side by side before and during the period of Roman control, although the topographical relationship between the two is unclear. Presumably Ana was occupied by the Sassanians in the mid-third century. The emperor Julian's army passed through the area in A.D. 363.<sup>76</sup>

#### Kifrin (fig. 7)

Kifrin is located on cliffs overlooking the east bank of the Euphrates.<sup>77</sup> Surface survey by Italian and Iraqi archaeologists revealed an inner

73. See Northedge, Bamber, and Roaf, *Excavations at Ana*.

74. *CIS* II, 3979, modified in E. Lipinski, "Apladad," *Orientalia* 45 (1976): 53–74.

75. J. Cantineau, "Tadmorea 4: L'inscription de Umm es-Salabih," *Syria* 14 (1933): 178–80.

76. Ammianus Marcellinus 24.1.6–10 refers to an encounter with an aged Roman soldier left behind during the campaigns of Galerius at the turn of the century.

77. See A. Invernizzi, "Kifrin" (1983), 207–9; "Kifrin" (1987), 156–66; "Researches in Kifrin"; "Kifrin and the Euphrates *Limes*"; "Kifrin-Βηχουφρείν." See also Valtz, "Kifrin, the 'Limes' Fortress."

walled “citadel” of about two hectares within a larger area of about twelve hectares referred to as the “town.” There was an outer fortification wall on the eastern, desert side, but it was not traced on the western side, where it may have been eroded by the river. There was evidence of extramural buildings and tombs. The “citadel” included a substantial residence with a peristyle courtyard at the rear, as well as a bath building with a hypocaust and traces of mosaic. In the “town” area, two structures, buildings A and B, were excavated, the former interpreted as military *principia* or a religious building, the latter as a religious structure.<sup>78</sup> The excavators suggest that the settlement was occupied in a single phase, which, on the basis of coins, pottery, and the history of the area, was from the Severan period to the mid-third century A.D.<sup>79</sup> Graffiti in Latin, Greek, and apparently Aramaic written in Hatraean letters were discovered, including many names with an *Aurelius* element. These were comparable to names of auxiliary soldiers at Dura-Europos and probably designated individuals who gained citizenship under the *Constitutio Antoniniana* in the reign of Caracalla.<sup>80</sup>

The excavations have not been published in detail yet. The excavators interpret Kifrin as a Severan fortress in origin, the “spearhead of this advanced front of the desert *limes*.”<sup>81</sup> Invernizzi suggests that Kifrin was the otherwise unidentified Βηχχουφρεΐν (Bechufrayn) of papyri found at Dura. This seems to have been a post downstream from Dura, with detachments of men posted from Dura’s *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*. The excavators suggest that the site was important in the military command structure of the region and that the elaborate residence on the “citadel” was occupied by a precursor of the *dux ripae* at Dura-Europos.<sup>82</sup> They are unclear what proportion of the “town’s” occupants were civilians, but they note the high proportion of family tombs in the necropolis.

It is difficult to dispute this picture with limited published evidence,

78. Invernizzi, “Kifrin and the Euphrates *Limes*,” 367, 375 n. 4; Valtz, “Kifrin, the ‘Limes’ Fortress,” 116–18.

79. For coins see Invernizzi, “Kifrin and the Euphrates *Limes*,” 369. Pottery includes both Parthian-type green glazed wares comparable to those from Seleucia on the Tigris and Dura and brittle ware like that from Dura-Europos. A number of Greek stamped amphora handles are mentioned, and there is a single Latin stamped amphora handle of Baetican manufacture from the second century A.D.

80. Invernizzi, “Kifrin and the Euphrates *Limes*,” 367, 369.

81. Valtz, “Kifrin, the ‘Limes’ Fortress,” 111.

82. Invernizzi, “Kifrin and the Euphrates *Limes*,” 375 n. 1; “Kifrin-Βηχχουφρεΐν,” *passim*.

but the preliminary reports pose some problems. The fortified character of the site, the existence of Latin and Greek graffiti, and in particular the *Aurelius* names, so typical of third-century auxiliary troops, do, however, point to a Roman military presence, and the identification of the site as Βηχχουφρεῖν is plausible but unproven.

The topography of the site suggests parallels with Dura-Europos, with a distinct military area at one end of a larger, fortified civilian settlement. The “citadel” seems more separate from the “town” than was the camp at Dura, but the fact that the “citadel” was lower than the highest part of the “town” at Kifrin suggests a mixed camp and civilian settlement like Dura rather than an acropolis dominating the town and serving as a last fortified refuge. Valtz implies that the “citadel” was primarily for the commander, with troops housed in the “town,” using an extramural bath building.<sup>83</sup> Despite the predominance of family tombs, the excavators present the site primarily as a military station with some civilians. However, the architecture of building B suggests a civilian function and Mesopotamian origin, and it is likely that Kifrin was a mixed civilian/military settlement, with a garrison mainly, but not entirely, based in the “citadel.” It is a fairly small site, and the excavators may exaggerate its importance. There is no need to assume the presence of a precursor of the *dux ripae*. The citadel residence is much smaller than the “Palace of the *Dux Ripae*” at Dura and is more like the house interpreted as the commander’s residence there. There is no particular reason to assume that Kifrin was an important, autonomous command. It seems likely that Kifrin consisted of a moderate-sized garrison established within a small civilian community, and we might assume the general character of civilian-military interaction to be similar to Dura.

The final problem concerns the chronology of the settlement and the character of the civilian population. The excavators view Kifrin as a Roman military foundation of the Severan period, rather than a military base established in an existing civilian settlement. They note that Isidore of Charax’s first-century itinerary of Parthian stations along the Euphrates does not mention a site identifiable as Kifrin.<sup>84</sup> The excavators mention Assyrian tombs in and around the town but note the uniformity of

83. Valtz, “Kifrin, the ‘Limes’ Fortress,” 120. Unlike Invernizzi, Valtz does not propose a military function for building A, which is in the “town.” The military interpretation of this building is conspicuously absent from Valtz, “Kifrin, a Fortress of *Limes* on the Euphrates,” 84–86.

84. Invernizzi, “Researches in Kifrin,” 25.

construction techniques visible in the settlement and suggest a single phase of occupation.<sup>85</sup> They date this to the Severan period of the mid-third century on the basis of the coins and the pottery. This interpretation implies a fairly small civilian population that perhaps arrived with the army, principally soldiers' families. Or perhaps the military occupation attracted a population of local civilians. Another possibility is that there was pre-Roman civilian occupation of the site underlying the Severan phase, undetected due to the limited scale of fieldwork. A papyrus letter from Dura from the early third century records that a soldier served at Bechufraḡn μετὰ τῶν οἰκείων μου ἀπάντων [with all my family].<sup>86</sup> It is not clear whether the individual was recruited locally and had a local family or originated and was married elsewhere and brought his wife and children to live in the fortress when he was sent there.

In summary, Kifrin looks like a smaller version of Dura-Europos, and on the basis of that similarity, one might assume a similar spatial relationship between its military and civilian occupants. However, the excavators of the site view it in different terms, considering it primarily military in origin and population. In this case, the army perhaps attracted civilian settlement, rather than the civilian settlement attracting the army as at Dura. Further fieldwork or publication may produce more solutions to these problems.<sup>87</sup>

### Northern Mesopotamia in the Severan Period

#### Nisibis

Nisibis was founded at Antioch in Mygdonia,<sup>88</sup> perhaps by Seleucus Nicator, and was occupied briefly by Lucullus in 68 B.C. and by Trajan in A.D. 115–17. There may have been a Roman garrison by A.D. 194, and Septimius Severus used it as a base in his first Parthian war.<sup>89</sup> During his reign it had the title *Colonia Septimia Nisibis* and served as

85. Valtz, "Kifrin, the 'Limes' Fortress," 113. However, Invernizzi ("Kifrin and the Euphrates Limes") observes that evidence of rebuilding does exist in places, although it was difficult to produce a detailed chronology of the changes.

86. *Dura Final Report* 5.1, 183–85, no. 46.

87. Gregory, in *Roman Military Architecture*, 2:164–68, summarizes the evidence with similar skepticism over the excavators' views of the military importance of Kifrin and its primarily military character.

88. See Pliny *NH* 6.42.

89. See Cassius Dio 75.2.3.

metropolis of the province of Mesopotamia. The significance of its colonial status is discussed in chapter 1. Given its established military role, it may have been the base of *legio III Parthica* (one of Septimius Severus' three *legiones Parthicae*) through the first half of the third century A.D.<sup>90</sup> There is no clear archaeological or epigraphic evidence for the location of the legionary camp, which presumably was close to or within the existing fortifications of the city.<sup>91</sup> Nisibis was a focus of conflict between the Roman and Sassanian Persian empires from the mid-third century A.D. Its role as a fortress city in that period is discussed in appendix B.

#### Rhesaina (fig. 11)

The origins of the city of Rhesaina (modern Ras-el-Ain) on the River Khabur are obscure, although there are Assyrian and Hellenistic remains at the site.<sup>92</sup> It carried the title *Septimia Colonia Rhesaina* and thus probably was refounded in the Severan period. The significance of its colonial status is discussed in chapter 1. In the reign of Severus Alexander, the city produced issues of coins with military types including a vexillum standard and sometimes the inscription *LEG III P S*. Other issues of an unidentified mint also bear a vexillum and sometimes the legion's title. These date from Caracalla's reign to that of Alexander Severus and have also been assigned to Rhesaina.<sup>93</sup> Thus it has been suggested that *legio III Parthica* was once based at Rhesaina. However, Kennedy argues that Nisibis was the regular base of that legion in the Severan period and that the appearance of the legion on the coins of

90. See Oates, "A Note on Three Latin Inscriptions from Hatra," 40; Kennedy, "The Garrisoning of Mesopotamia," 61. However, it is possible that all or part of *legio I Parthica* was based at Nisibis in the first half of the third century. Until recently this hypothesis was based on the fact that the legion has the title *Nisibena* in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (Or. 36.29; see Lightfoot, "Facts and Fiction," 108–9). However, a recently discovered papyrus from the middle Euphrates indicates that a centurion *primipilus* of that legion was present at the sale of a slave to his wife at Nisibis in A.D. 252 (Feissel and Gascou, "Documents" [1989], 559, no. 9). This evidence strengthens the case for an early move by all or part of *I Parthica* to Nisibis.

91. Cassius Dio 36.6 mentions that the city had strong brick walls and a moat when the Roman general Lucullus attacked it in 68 B.C. Lightfoot, in "Facts and Fiction," 109, provides a brief summary of what little is known.

92. See M. von Oppenheim, *Tell Halaf* (1941), 73–74.

93. Castelin, *The Coinage of Rhessaena in Mesopotamia*, 38, no. 43, pl. V is a coin of Severus Alexander naming the city and the legion; *ibid.*, 20, no. 17, pl. III is a vexillum-type coin of the same emperor.

Rhesaina was due to settlement of veterans there.<sup>94</sup> Veteran settlement alone may explain the coins, but it is also possible that a vexillation of the legion was posted at Rhesaina while the main body was at Nisibis. Castelin suggests that types on some issues of the unnamed vexillum coinage, with two vexilla separated by an eagle legionary standard, may symbolize such a situation.<sup>95</sup>

When he visited the site in the last century, J.G. Taylor expressed his disappointment at the poverty of the remains there. Von Oppenheim recorded ruins covering more than one hundred hectares and claimed to be able to distinguish a military camp, and amphitheater, and the wall of a Roman bath within the site.<sup>96</sup> The clearest evidence for the Roman fortress is in the publication of a single season of excavation and clearance of the tell on the site, Tell Fakhariyah, by an American team in 1940.<sup>97</sup> This revealed part of a wall circuit of limestone-faced rubble overlooking the Khabur River, with the remains of seven U-shaped towers typical of later Roman fortifications in the region.<sup>98</sup> Kraeling and Haines, who published this part of the excavation, suggest that these walls relate to the Theodosian rebuilding of Rhesaina discussed in appendix B and represent adaptation of the existing settlement to a fortress rather than the Severan legionary camp.<sup>99</sup> Soundings in the tell itself produced evidence for a latrine and a rectangular building associated with the fortress, as well as pottery dating back as far as the second millennium B.C. It included Hellenistic material and Roman African Red Slip and Late Roman "C" wares.

#### Singara (fig. 15)

Singara served as the base of *legio I Parthica*, another of the Severan *legiones Parthicae*. This is shown by an inscription from Aphrodisias, a dedication by a veteran of that legion described as *Severiana Antoniniana*

94. Kennedy, "The Garrisoning of Mesopotamia," 61.

95. Castelin, *The Coinage of Rhesaena*, 24.

96. J.G. Taylor, "Journal of a Tour in Armenia, Kurdistan, and Upper Mesopotamia," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* 38 (1868): 281–361, at 351; von Oppenheim, *Tell Halaf*, 74.

97. C.W. McEwan et al., *Soundings at Tell Fakhariyah*, University of Chicago Oriental Institute Publications, vol. 79 (1958). Also see Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 2:89–93.

98. McEwan et al., *Soundings at Tell Fakhariyah*, 11–15.

99. *Ibid.*, 16–17.

and as “at Singara.”<sup>100</sup> Like Nisibis, Singara changed hands between Romans and Sassanians from the mid-third century A.D., and its later history as a fortress city is discussed in appendix B. Oates records little archaeological evidence of pre-Roman urban settlement, although Pliny the Elder states that the site was the center for an Arab tribe, and Cassius Dio mentions it by name in reference to the campaigns of Trajan.<sup>101</sup> The strategic importance of the site and the substantial population of the area throughout antiquity (implied by the density of tell sites nearby) argue in favor of a pre-Roman nucleus.<sup>102</sup>

A wall circuit that Oates dated to the early fourth century A.D. encloses an area of ca. twenty hectares.<sup>103</sup> Kennedy and Riley raise the possibility that this circuit follows the walls of the earlier fortress, but they note its peculiar irregular plan compared to most Severan fortresses.<sup>104</sup> However, uneven topography may have produced an irregular fortress in the Severan period too. Alternatively it perhaps conformed to the lines of a pre-Roman circuit. Thus it is possible that the Romans installed their fortress in a preexisting urban settlement at Singara, but there is no conclusive evidence.

### Hatra

Hatra was an independent Arab foundation, wealthy, large, and well fortified before the Roman presence in the area. The Roman army failed to capture the city in three sieges in A.D. 117 under Trajan and in two in A.D. 199–200 in the reign of Septimius Severus. The city finally fell to the Sassanians in A.D. 240/1 after a failed attempt by Ardashir I.<sup>105</sup> Hatra

100. ILS 9477, completed in Spiedel and Reynolds, “A Veteran of *Legio I Parthica* from Carian Aphrodisias”: (ἥτις λεγιὼν ἐστὶν ἐν Σινγάροις τῆς Μεσοποταμίας πρὸς τῷ Τίγρει ποταμῷ [which legion is at Singara in Mesopotamia by the river Tigris] (probably before A.D. 218).

101. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 97–98; Pliny NH 5.21; Cassius Dio 68.22.

102. See Gregory and Kennedy, *Sir Aurel Stein's Limes Report*, 7–8.

103. For plans and photography, see Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 98, fig. 8; Gregory and Kennedy, *Sir Aurel Stein's Limes Report*, 8, pl. 1; 10, fig. 1; 14, pl. 3; 16, pl. 4; 18, p. 5; Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*, 126, fig. 73; 127, fig. 74; 128, fig. 75. For the date, see Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 106.

104. Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*, 128–30.

105. For the last date, see Potter, *Prophecy and History*, 190, on the evidence of the Köln Mani codex.

was deserted by A.D. 363.<sup>106</sup> Siege works around the city are visible in aerial photographs but cannot be assigned to a specific siege, and “Roman camps” near the city mentioned by some visitors are not visible in photographs.<sup>107</sup>

Despite Rome’s failure to take the city by siege, there is evidence of a Roman military presence there for part of its history. Three Latin dedications were found in a temple in the city.<sup>108</sup> The first is an altar with a damaged inscription including a consular date of A.D. 235. The second is a dedication to *sol invictus* [unconquered sun], further described as *religio loci* [the cult of the place] by Q. Petronius Quintianus, who describes himself as tribune of *legio I Parthica* and *cohors IX Maurorum*. The third is a dedication to Hercules by the same officer.<sup>109</sup> He seems to be on detached duty from a legion, commanding an auxiliary unit,<sup>110</sup> a practice attested at Dura-Europos, and as Maricq suggests, the dedication to a native god appears the act of an ally, not a conqueror.<sup>111</sup> Oates and Maricq suggest that an alliance with Rome was made against the Sassanians on the break up of Parthian power and that Roman auxiliary troops helped to garrison the city. One imagines that the Roman force would have been installed in the city, within the existing fortified circuit.<sup>112</sup>

There is further evidence of a Severan and later Roman military presence around the Khabur and east toward the Tigris, before the Sassanian conquests of the mid-third century. However, the other sites with good dating evidence are isolated forts with no attested prior civilian occupation.<sup>113</sup> Thus evidence from northern Mesopotamia of the

106. See Ammianus Marcellinus 25.8.5.

107. Kennedy and Riley, *Rome’s Desert Frontier*, 105, fig. 53; 106; 107. Gawlikowski, “A Fortress in Mesopotamia,” provides a good discussion of the fortifications.

108. D. Oates, “A Note on Three Latin Inscriptions from Hatra.”

109. For these inscriptions, see Oates, “A Note on Three Latin Inscriptions from Hatra,” 40, nos. 80–81, with the modified reading of the Hercules inscription (no. 81) suggested by A. Maricq in “Les Dernières années de Hatra: L’alliance romaine,” *Syria* 34 (1957): 288–96.

110. See Oates, “A Note on Three Latin Inscriptions from Hatra,” 41.

111. Maricq, “Les Dernières années de Hatra,” 290.

112. See also Potter, *Prophecy and History*, 191, 378–79, on the garrison and alliance, Z. Rubin, “Dio, Herodian, and Severus’ Second Parthian War,” *Chiron* 5 (1975): 419–41, on the Severan sieges and the alliance.

113. These include the two forts at Ain Sinu (see Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 80–92; Kennedy and Riley, *Rome’s Desert Frontier*, 168–71, figs. 113–14; 213–15, figs. 167–68), Bir Haidar (see Kennedy and Riley, op. cit., 148–49, fig. 91), and perhaps Tell Brak 2 (see *ibid.*, 215, fig. 169).

later second and early centuries A.D. shows two existing urban centers as probable legionary bases (Nisibis, Singara), one auxiliary unit apparently based in a city (Hatra), and a few examples of more conventional isolated forts.

### Administrative and Logistical Support of the Eastern Frontier: Antioch on the Orontes and Seleucia Pieria to the Sassanian Wars

#### Antioch on the Orontes

Antioch was founded by Seleucus I Nicator in 301 B.C. It was walled from its foundation, although growth required rebuilding of the circuit over the following centuries. With the loss of Asia Minor and of eastern Seleucid territories to the Parthians, Antioch became the Seleucid royal capital in the second century B.C. The military importance of the city is illustrated by Polybius' description of the military contingents in the great parade in Daphne in 167 B.C., in the reign of Antiochus IV.<sup>114</sup>

The earliest accounts of Roman troops there date to 51 and 43 B.C., when troops of Cassius were based there.<sup>115</sup> Antioch served as the Roman provincial capital of Syria and hence as the seat of the proconsul and such officials as the procurator of the province. Provincial governors generally had military personnel on their staffs, including specialists and assistants as well as larger bodies of troops for keeping order.<sup>116</sup> Given the importance of Antioch, it is likely that military personnel were a near-constant feature of civic life there, probably quartered in the city near the governor.<sup>117</sup> Very few military inscriptions from Antioch have been discovered,<sup>118</sup> but one clearly relates to such an individual. This is the tombstone of a military tribune of *legio X Fretensis*, described as *adiutor*

114. Polybius 30.25.2–11.

115. See Cicero *Ad Att.* 5.18.1; *Ad Fam.* 12.15.7.

116. The letters of Pliny the Younger from Bithynia show that his staff included *beneficiarii* (10.21, 27) and, on one occasion, an army engineer (10.42, 61).

117. In general, see Isaac, *Limits*, 436–38. Wheeler (“The Laxity of Syrian Legions”) may be right to assert that there was no legionary fortress at Antioch, but he underestimates the importance of soldiers in the area. The limited epigraphic and nonexistent archaeological evidence for this relates to poor survival and recovery of inscriptions, extensive silting of the site, and the limited scale of excavation.

118. In fact, there are surprisingly few inscriptions at all from Antioch, given the size and importance of the city. Downey (*A History of Antioch in Syria*, 25) suggests that this is due to the constant reuse of stone from the site for lime and construction.

(assistant) to the *procurator Augusti*.<sup>119</sup> It is probably Julio-Claudian, as the legion was redeployed to Judaea to counter the revolt of A.D. 66. Another inscription from Antioch, a fragmentary tombstone of a military tribune of VI *Ferrata*, may refer to another military assistant.<sup>120</sup>

We have few details of legionary deployments in Julio-Claudian Syria, and perhaps an entire legion was based near Antioch sometimes. Tacitus' *Histories* (2.80.3) may indicate a legionary fortress nearby in A.D. 69. Large concentrations of troops also assembled near Antioch for campaigns on the eastern frontier, with the emperor himself or a senior commander, such as Germanicus or Corbulo, present in the city. Trajan arrived at Seleucia Pieria at the end of A.D. 113 and moved to Antioch in January A.D. 114 to prepare for his Parthian war.<sup>121</sup> After the war, in the winter of A.D. 115–16, he returned to the city. He was there when an earthquake struck in December A.D. 115. Cassius Dio notes that casualties caused in that disaster were greater because the city was crowded with soldiers and other visitors connected with the emperor.<sup>122</sup> Antioch was Lucius Verus' base for his Parthian war, although the author of the *Life of Verus* and the *Life of Marcus Aurelius* in the *Historia Augusta* claims that he lived in luxury in Antioch, while he waged the war through legates who actually commanded the troops.<sup>123</sup>

Severus Alexander used Antioch as a base for preparation of his Persian war in the winter of A.D. 231–32. Herodian records that Alexander trained and exercised his troops there and that some of them mutinied, while the author of the (admittedly notoriously fictional) *Life of Severus Alexander* in the *Historia Augusta* notes the troops' lax discipline and tendency to seek luxury during their stay in the city.<sup>124</sup> Alexander harangued them about their behavior, and, the author of the *Historia Augusta* account tells us, they returned *non ad castra, sed ad deversoria varia* [not to the camp, but to scattered lodgings]. The term *deversoria* means "lodgings," or "an inn," and its use here suggests that troops were billeted in private houses and lodging places throughout the city rather than in separate camps outside its walls. However, this account may be anachronistic, reflecting practices in the fourth century, when it probably was written.

119. *IGLS* III.1, 837.

120. *IGLS* III.1, 813.

121. See Malalas 270.17–23, 272.21–22.

122. Cassius Dio 68.24–25.

123. *HA*, V. *M. Aurel.* 8.12; V. *L. Ver.* 7.1–10.

124. Herodian 6.4.3f.; *HA*, V. *Sev. Alex.* 54.4.

Little evidence from Antioch itself attests to such military activity in and around the city. One fragmentary inscription from the general area of Antioch may be relevant.<sup>125</sup> This is the tombstone of *[Cl]aud(ius) Surus, [mi]l(es) coh(ortis) IIII prae(torianae)*. The presence of a praetorian cohort suggests an imperial visit for an eastern campaign, but the name *Surus* suggests that he was a Syrian veteran who retired to his home province rather than someone who died there on active service.

Antioch fell to the Sassanians in A.D. 252.<sup>126</sup> None of the sketchy evidence indicates that there was a substantial Roman force close enough to defend the city, a typical situation later in its history too. The presence of imperial officials, such as the governor, probably ensured the constant presence of some military personnel in the city, but not a large permanent garrison. However, large numbers of troops were based in and around Antioch for several months at a time at regular intervals throughout the second and early third centuries A.D., when it served as a training and transit camp for units preparing for campaigns against the Persian empire. Antioch served a similar function in later centuries (see app. B).

#### Seleucia Pieria (fig. 8)

Seleucia Pieria was a city of the original Syrian tetrapolis founded by Seleucus I Nicator. It was walled from the beginning and had a fortified acropolis and presumably a garrison. Thus like many other sites examined, it has a Seleucid military heritage before it was occupied by the Romans. It also had a large harbor, rare on the Syrian coast.

Roman military personnel at Seleucia can be divided into four categories. The first group were men of the Misenum and Ravenna fleets of the Roman navy who were there for logistical support of major expeditions to the east. The second group was also composed of sailors, this time of the local *Classis Syriaca*, engaged probably in routine defensive duties on the Syrian coast and perhaps in antipiracy duties in Cyprus and Cilicia. The third category were army personnel en route to campaigns further east, and the fourth were soldiers engaged in maintenance of the port.

The importance of Seleucia Pieria for seaborne communication between Syria and the rest of the empire is demonstrated by funerary inscriptions commemorating men of the Misenum and Ravenna fleets. Normally

125. *IGLS* III.1, 987.

126. See Potter, *Prophecy and History*, 270–73, 290–308, 338–40. It probably did not fall in A.D. 260 too, despite the contentions of some sources.

they were based in Italy, but they were used to support major military campaigns elsewhere.<sup>127</sup> The tombstones form two groups in terms of location, monumentality, and status of the individuals commemorated. The first consists of Latin commemorations of officers of the Misenum fleet and their families. There are four complete funerary inscriptions of officers (*IGLS* III.2, 1155, 1158, 1159) and one set up by an officer and his stepdaughter to her mother (*IGLS* III.2, 1157). These were found together, reused in a later city wall near the main gate of the city, and probably came from a cemetery nearby. They were elaborately carved monumental markers.<sup>128</sup>

The second group of inscriptions, also Latin, are on simple marble-slab covers for ash urns and are funerary markers of ordinary soldiers of the Misenum and Ravenna fleets.<sup>129</sup> Ten mention the Misenum fleet (*IGLS* III.2, 1161, 1162, 1165, 1166, 1167, 1168, 1170, 1171, 1172, 1178) and four the Ravenna fleet (*IGLS* III.2, 1164, 1177, 1180, 1181). They were found on the coast side of the city, between the Flavian aqueduct and the port, where, Seyrig assumes, their barracks were located.<sup>130</sup> It is likely that sailors lived in this area near the port. Officers and their families probably lived in the city and were buried near the main “Porte du Marché” alongside the road to Antioch.

The chronology of the inscriptions is discussed at length by Seyrig and van Berchem.<sup>131</sup> One general marker is the title *praetorian*, applied to the two fleets and found on all the complete inscriptions, and attested on diplomas before A.D. 114, but not in A.D. 71. Many sailors have the *tria nomina*, gained when Hadrian awarded most sailors Latin rights before A.D. 129. The general absence of Aurelii among them suggests that the inscriptions predate the *Constitutio Antoniniana* of A.D. 212. Seyrig suggests that the name of the trireme *Dacicus* in *IGLS* III.2, 1167 was appropriate to shortly after Trajan’s victory in A.D. 102. Many of these monuments probably date to Lucius Verus’ Parthian war in A.D. 162–66. There is further evidence that part of the Misenum fleet was at Seleucia in A.D. 166, namely, a dated papyrus contract of sale of a slave between a

127. See van Berchem, “Le Port de Séleucie,” 62.

128. See H. Seyrig, “Le Cimetière des marins à Séleucie de Piérie,” in *Mélanges syriens offerts à René Dussaud* (1939), 451f., for information on the cemetery.

129. See *ibid.*, 452.

130. *Ibid.*, 452.

131. *Ibid.*, 458; van Berchem, “Le Port de Séleucie,” 62.

sailor and an officer of the Misenum fleet, which states that their winter quarters were at Seleucia.<sup>132</sup>

There are fewer references to the *Classis Syriaca* in inscriptions from Seleucia. These are funerary monuments from the sailors' cemetery (IGLS III.2, 1163, 1169, 1175, and possibly 1174). There are some references (e.g., IGLS III.2, 1163) to *liburnae*, small, fast vessels, and this and the local title of the fleet suggests a coastal defense role, perhaps combating pirates.<sup>133</sup> It is not certain that this fleet was based at Seleucia, but the *Classis Seleucena* of the fourth century A.D.<sup>134</sup> may be the earlier *Classis Syriaca* under a new name. The earliest evidence for the *Classis Syriaca* is Hadrianic.<sup>135</sup>

There is also evidence from Seleucia Pieria of army personnel of units normally based outside the eastern provinces, probably in transit to the eastern frontier. The first inscription (IGLS III.2, 1160) is from the cemetery near the "Porte du Marché," and commemorates an individual (perhaps an *optio*; the reading is uncertain) of *legio VIII Augusta*, normally based on the Rhine. The second is from the sailors' cemetery (IGLS III.2, 1173), commemorating a *signifier* of *legio IIII Flavia*. These legions are both named in inscriptions from Cyrrhus, perhaps related to the same campaign.<sup>136</sup> They do not provide us with information about the location of legionary camps. Units in transit may have occupied temporary camps outside the city walls.

Army units were also used to maintain the port. This further emphasizes the logistical significance of Seleucia Pieria, which was important enough for the state to devote military manpower to improving and maintaining its port. Epigraphic evidence highlights the role of the army in two projects.

The first project was a barrage diverting a torrent from the mountains away from the port, to prevent it from silting the harbor. The water was channeled into a tunnel and rock-cut canal leading to the sea.<sup>137</sup> The cutting of the rock to construct this diversion required considerable labor by naval detachments and legionary vexillations. Unit titles are inscribed

132. FIRA<sup>2</sup> III, 132, lines 17–18: *Actum Seleucia Pieriae in castris hibernis vexillationis clas(sis) pr(aetorianae) Misenentium*.

133. See van Berchem, "Le Port de Séleucie," 64.

134. See C.Th. 10.23 (= CJ 11.13).

135. See CIL VIII, 8934.

136. IGLS I, 152 and 150, respectively, discussed earlier in this appendix.

137. See van Berchem, "Le Port de Séleucie," 53–59.

in living rock in Greek and Latin, some with the formula ὅθεν ἀρχή, apparently marking the extent of the unit's labor. The units named are a detachment of *legio IIII (Scythica?)* (IGLS III.2, 1137) under a centurion, a vexillation of *legio X (Fretensis?)* (IGLS III.2, 1139) and a naval unit under a navarch (IGLS III.2, 1138). Van Berchem suggests that the original construction was carried out under Vespasian.<sup>138</sup> Two later inscriptions, dating from Antoninus Pius' reign, refer to further work, cleaning or repair of the same channel by vexillations of *legiones IIII Scythica* and *XVI Flavia Firma*.<sup>139</sup>

A second project is recorded in an inscription discussed in the introduction, as evidence for the garrison of Syria in A.D. 75 and in chapter 7.<sup>140</sup> It refers to work done by four legions—*IIII Scythica*, *VI Ferrata*, *XVI Flavia Firma*, and probably *III Gallica* (most of the name is lost)—twenty unnamed cohorts, and some *Antiochenses*. Their work is described as *Dipotamiae fluminis ductum millia passus tria cum pontibus* [a channel of the river [double river] of three thousands paces with bridges]. Van Berchem suggests that the *Dipotamia flumen* was the Orontes between Antioch and the division of Orontes and Karasu on the edge of the plain of Antioch.<sup>141</sup> In addition to construction of bridges mentioned in the inscription, the work may have involved dredging and embankment construction to prevent flooding and improve the navigability of the river from Antioch to Gephyra, whence roads led east to points on the Euphrates, including Zeugma.<sup>142</sup> Again, logistical support of the army was probably the reason for military involvement in the work. It is unclear where the soldiers were accommodated for these projects, but temporary camps outside the city seem likely. The involvement of army personnel in harbor maintenance continued into the early fourth century. Libanius records that in the reign of Diocletian, a group of five hundred soldiers laboring on harbor works at Seleucia mutinied, proclaimed their commander emperor, and briefly occupied Antioch, until they were defeated by the population of the city.<sup>143</sup>

Thus there is much evidence for the stationing of military personnel at

138. Ibid., 58–59.

139. IGLS III.2, 1135 and 1136, the latter heavily reconstructed in van Berchem, “Le Port de Séleucie,” 84–85, app. 3.

140. Van Berchem, “Le Port de Séleucie,” 85–87, app. 4.

141. Ibid., 70.

142. Ibid., 66, 70.

143. Libanius Or. 11.158–62, 19.45–46, 20.18–20.

Seleucia Pieria, from the Flavian period through the second century (naval tombstones) to the fourth-century *Classis Seleucena*. The material does not provide us with complete information on where the troops lived and worked, but the naval funerary monuments suggest that sailors lived in an area by the port and that officers and their families perhaps lived in the city itself. Roman army units at Seleucia may have been there on a more temporary basis and may have built camps outside the city proper.



## APPENDIX B

### Catalogue of Sites from the Later Empire Mentioned in the Main Text

#### Northern Mesopotamia

##### Singara (fig. 15)

The Severan legionary fortress at Singara was discussed in appendix A. Writing about the loss of the city to the Persians in A.D. 360, Ammianus claimed that the city had fallen several times in the past with the loss of its garrison.<sup>1</sup> There is little detailed evidence of these disasters, but Oates notes that coins of Singara were struck under Gordian III, and he suggests that Singara was lost to Sapor I and regained by Carus in A.D. 283.<sup>2</sup> Ammianus mentions that the Romans lost a battle there in Constantius II's reign, gives a detailed description of Sapor II's siege in A.D. 360, and states that the city was surrendered to the Sassanians by Jovian in A.D. 363.<sup>3</sup>

Oates and Stein discuss the topography of Singara.<sup>4</sup> It is surrounded by walls with U-shaped towers to the north, west, and south, and Oates records traces of a large rock-cut ditch outside the enceinte. He dates the walls to the early fourth century by comparison with Amida and on the basis of historical sources. Little is known of the ancient city inside the fortifications, because of medieval and modern settlement of the site, but the area within the walls is ca. twenty hectares, at least a third again as large as the camp area at Dura-Europos. As Kennedy and Riley state, the fortress was large for smaller late imperial legions, and there was room for

1. Ammianus Marcellinus 20.6.9.

2. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 99.

3. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.5.7, 20.6.1–9, 25.8.11.

4. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 97–106; Gregory and Kennedy, *Sir Aurel Stein's Limes Report*, 6–21. References to plans and photographs are given in app. A, above. See also Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 2:104–8.

a substantial civilian population inside.<sup>5</sup> The large wartime garrison of A.D. 360 recorded by Ammianus consisted of *legio I Parthica* (as in the Severan period), *legio I Flavia*, and *indigenae plures* [“many locals,” perhaps citizens of Singara or, taking the word in a broader sense, Mesopotamians] *cum auxilio equitum* [with the support of cavalry].<sup>6</sup>

Virtually nothing is known of the civilian population of the city, as no inscriptions from the site provide evidence. Ammianus records their fierce resistance to the Persian siege of A.D. 360, and most were deported to Persia after the capture of the city.<sup>7</sup>

### Nisibis

As described in appendix A, Nisibis was the Seleucid settlement of Antioch in Mygdonia and had a Roman garrison by the late second century A.D. It was the base probably of *legio III Parthica* from the Severan period and perhaps of *legio I Parthica* by the mid-third century. A Talmudic source translated by Oppenheimer refers to the city as one that Rome “sometimes swallows and sometimes spits out,”<sup>8</sup> and like Singara, Nisibis suffered successive occupations and sieges by Romans and Persians in the later third and fourth centuries.<sup>9</sup> It was the seat of the *dux Mesopotamiae*, and Ammianus stresses its strategic importance and refers to the city as *orientis firmissimum claustrum* [the strongest defense of the east] and *urbs inexpugnabilis* [an unassailable city].<sup>10</sup> It was finally surrendered to the Persians with Singara by Jovian in A.D. 363, against the wishes of its inhabitants, who were allowed to leave with the Roman army.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently Nisibis became a Persian fortress city and served a role similar to that performed under Roman control, and it is prominent in Procopius’ account of Justinian’s wars.

Little is known of the topography of the ancient city. Little archaeological work has been done there, and there is no plan of Roman or Sassanian

5. Kennedy and Riley, *Rome’s Desert Frontier*, 128.

6. Ammianus Marcellinus 20.6.8.

7. Ibid., 20.6.4–7.

8. Qiddushin 72a, cited in Oppenheimer, *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period*, 319.

9. The evidence for the three sieges, particularly the third (in A.D. 350), is summarized in Lightfoot, “Facts and Fiction.” A variety of Greek and local Syriac authors (such as Ephrem the Syrian, in his *Carmina Nisibena*) discuss the events of the third siege with a wealth of detail that is more or less reliable.

10. Ammianus Marcellinus 25.8.14, 17.

11. See *ibid.*, 25.7.11, 25.8–9.

remains.<sup>12</sup> Ammianus' account indicates that the city was walled. He also mentions an *arx* (citadel).<sup>13</sup> The only evidence for the late imperial garrison is the *Notitia Dignitatum*.<sup>14</sup> This was written after the loss of Nisibis but refers to *legio I Parthica* based at Constantina with the title *Nisibena*, suggesting that it formed the garrison of Nisibis between its two recorded appearances at Singara. In his account of Jovian's surrender, Ammianus mentions establishment of *extra urbem stativa castra* [a fixed camp outside the city]. This perhaps was usual when there was no hostile enemy in the immediate vicinity (there was a truce in effect at this time), but presumably troops occupied the city itself and defended the walls under other, more threatening circumstances. Ammianus also refers to a *palatium* (palace) in the city, which Jovian refused to enter *more principium* [in the manner of emperors], because of his embarrassment at surrendering the city.<sup>15</sup>

#### Bezabde (fig. 16)

Bezabde was a third fortress town lost to the Romans in the wars of the mid-fourth century. Most of our knowledge of the site derives from Ammianus' accounts of two sieges. There is no evidence of definite Roman occupation before the fourth century. Ammianus describes it as a town (*municipium*) with the name *Phaenicha* and a fortress (*muni-mentum*) with a double wall on a hill overlooking the Tigris.<sup>16</sup> This description appears in an account of a siege by Sapor II in A.D. 360, when the garrison consisted of *legiones II Flavia*, *II Armeniaca*, and *II Parthica*, along with local *Zabdiceni* archers, and when the civilian population assisted in the defense. The town fell to the Persians, who garrisoned it with their own troops, and an attempt at recapture by Constantius II failed later in that year.<sup>17</sup>

12. The limited evidence is mentioned in Lightfoot, "Facts and Fiction," 109–10. There are no published plans or aerial photographs of Nisibis by Stein or Poidebard. There is a description of the church of Mar Ya'qub, dated to A.D. 359 by an inscription, in Sarre and Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise*, 2:336–48, pls. cxxxviii and cxxxix. There is a brief description of the site and the church in Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey*, 3:343–45, and in M. Mango's notes in G. Bell, *The Churches and Monasteries of the Tur 'Abdin* (1982), 142–45.

13. Ammianus Marcellinus 25.9.1.

14. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 36.29.

15. Both *castra* and *palatium* occur at Ammianus Marcellinus 25.8.17. On the surrender and Persian occupation of Nisibis, see Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymni contra Julianum*, trans. J.M. Lieu, in S.N.C. Lieu, ed., *The Emperor Julian: Panegyric and Polemic*, 2d ed. (1989).

16. Ammianus Marcellinus 20.7.1.

17. See *ibid.*, 20.11.

Bezabde, previously located at modern Cizre, has been identified recently with the Turkish village of Eski Hendek, a hill overlooking the west bank of the Tigris with the remains of an ancient fortress of trapezoidal plan with double walls and a single-walled extension of the west side.<sup>18</sup> There are remains of U-shaped towers in both parts. The settlement, extending beyond the fortifications, covers at least twenty-four hectares. Other fortifications and settlement visible at the village of Eski Yapi/Fenik on the east bank, opposite Eski Hendek, are dated to the Parthian period and may be the town of Pinaka recorded by Strabo (16.1.24) and hence Ammianus' Phaenicha.

### Amida (fig. 10)

Unlike the three fortress cities previously discussed, Amida became an important military center in the fourth century and continued in this role through the early Byzantine period. Ammianus records it as a small city (*civitas perquam brevis*) fortified by Constantius II as a refuge for the local population when he was Caesar, between A.D. 324 and 337.<sup>19</sup> The most detailed account is Ammianus' narrative of the Persian siege of A.D. 359, which culminated in the city's temporary capture, although it was recaptured in ruins by Constantius himself.<sup>20</sup> He informs us that the garrison was regularly *legio V Parthica* and local cavalry but was increased by a further six legions during the siege. Amida stayed in Roman hands as capital of Mesopotamia after Jovian's peace treaty of A.D. 363, and several sources mention that refugees from Nisibis were accommodated there.<sup>21</sup> It is listed in the *Notitia Dignitatum* as a military base with two units of *equites*.<sup>22</sup> Amida continued to be important as a fortress city through the sixth century until its fall to the Arabs in A.D. 639.

The most comprehensive study of the topography of Amida (modern

18. For earlier views on the location of Bezabde, see C. Lightfoot, "The Site of Roman Bezabde," in *Armies and Frontiers in Roman and Byzantine Anatolia*, ed. S. Mitchell (1983), 189–204, Algaze, "A New Frontier: First Results of the Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project, 1988"; Algaze et al. "The Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project: A Preliminary Report," 191f.; M. Söylemaz and C.S. Lightfoot, "The Tigris-Euphrates Archaeological Reconnaissance Project: Numismatic Notes," in *Recent Turkish Coin Hoards and Numismatic Studies*, ed. C.S. Lightfoot (1991), 313–15.

19. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.9.1.

20. Ammianus Marcellinus 19.1.1–19.9.2 (siege), 20.9.5 (recapture).

21. Malalas 336; Zosimus 3.34.1.

22. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 36.19, 21.

Diyarbakir in Turkey) is that of Gabriel.<sup>23</sup> When he studied the site in 1932, the interior of the ancient city was built over by medieval and modern construction, and his work focuses on the basalt fortifications.<sup>24</sup> He provides plans and detailed descriptions of the huge enceinte, ca. five kilometers in length, with the Tigris forming the boundary to the east.<sup>25</sup> In their current condition the fortifications have a main wall with towers, most of which are U-shaped like those of Singara, but with some rectangular and polygonal. There are also an outer, lower, *proteichisma* wall on all sides except the east, which overlooks the Tigris, and a citadel of some eight hectares to the northeast, separated from the main part of the city with its own wall.<sup>26</sup>

The chronology of the fortifications is a complex issue. There is no stratigraphic evidence, so dating is based on epigraphic and historical evidence. Besides Ammianus' reference to Constantius' fortification of the city, there is a Latin inscription of Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian (hence A.D. 367–75) recording rebuilding of the walls “from the foundations” [*a [funda]menti[s]fabrica[vi]t*].<sup>27</sup> Procopius records that Justinian built the walls of the city,<sup>28</sup> and a number of undated Byzantine inscriptions were found reused and in situ in the walls.<sup>29</sup> Finally, there are Arabic inscriptions of the ninth to twelfth centuries.<sup>30</sup> Gabriel interprets this evidence as indicating that the original Roman circuit surrounded the eastern half of the modern city and that it was expanded by Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian to accommodate refugees from Nisibis. He suggests that the surviving fortifications are largely Byzantine (on the basis of parallels with dated Byzantine walls) with Arab repairs. Oates, however, notes the similarity of the fortifications, with U-shaped towers, to those of Singara, dated to the fourth century, and claims that the origins of Amida's walls are also in the fourth century.<sup>31</sup> None of this is important

23. A. Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques dans la Turquie Orientale* (1940), 85–205.

24. The main street of the city, from the north to the south gates, with a spur off to the west gate, appears to date to the period when the extant fortifications of the city were laid out.

25. For the general plan, see Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques*, 93, fig. 69; for a description of the fortifications, 95–150.

26. For the citadel, see *ibid.*, 151–57.

27. *CIL* III, 6730; Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques*, 135–36, fig. 108.

28. Procopius *Buildings* 2.3.27.

29. See Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques*, 135.

30. See *ibid.*, 135–44.

31. Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques*, 175–82. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, 103–6. However, in plan the walls of Amida are also similar to those of Dara, which are almost certainly sixth century.

for the interrelationship of soldiers and civilians. Presumably some troops occupied the citadel at times, but when the garrison was swollen by additional troops as during the siege of A.D. 359, they must have been spread throughout the city.

### Rhesaina-Theodosiopolis (fig. 11)

The history of Rhesaina in the Severan period and the possibility that it was a legionary base was discussed in appendix A.<sup>32</sup> There is little evidence of a military presence in the city in the later third and fourth centuries. Ammianus refers to the city only once and then in retrospect, mentioning Gordian III's victory over a century earlier.<sup>33</sup> According to Malalas, Rhesaina was a village (κώμη) when Theodosius I renamed it Theodosiopolis and made it a city.<sup>34</sup> This implies that Rhesaina had declined since the Severan period, unless Malalas' account exaggerates Theodosius's achievement. However, Ammianus' silence makes a decline plausible. If so, Rhesaina was like Amida or Dara, a small settlement enhanced in size and status when it gained military importance. The fortifications on the site probably date to the fourth or fifth centuries and derive from Theodosius's activities. It is likely that the garrison attested in the *Notitia Dignitatum* was installed at this time.<sup>35</sup> The city is mentioned a few times in the Syriac account (attributed to Joshua the Stylite), of Anastasius' Persian war,<sup>36</sup> but otherwise it was not an important military site in the sixth century.

32. See also Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 2:89–93, suggesting an earlier date than Theodosian for the fortifications.

33. Ammianus Marcellinus 23.5.17.

34. Malalas 345.

35. The *Notitia Dignitatum* is plagued by textual and geographical confusions at this point. The Theodosiopolis whose garrison is listed in *Or.* 36.20 as *equites promoti Illyriciani*, *Resain-Theodosiopolis* is depicted north of the Tigris (in *Or.* 36.2–5), with Amida, in the schematic map preserved in the manuscript. There may have been confusion with Theodosiopolis in Armenia (Camacha). In the *Notitia* entry for Osrhoene, there is a reference to an *ala I Parthorum* based at Resaia (*Or.* 35.30), which might be Resaina. Since the *Notitia Dignitatum* probably was compiled after the site changed its name from *Rhesaina*, from documents that included information from before the name change, it is hardly surprising that the compiler became confused.

36. E.g., see Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* (ed. Wright), 69, reporting that in A.D. 503 the “Greek” army assembled at Ras-Ain to raid Persian territory prior to linking up with forces at Amida.

## Constantia-Constantina

Constantia (modern Viranchehir, known as Constantina in the *Notitia Dignitatum*) was another fortress city on the Khabur, north of Rhesaina. Previously it was known as Tela and then achieved civic status as Antoninopolis, probably under Caracalla or Elagabalus.<sup>37</sup> It seems to have become more important when Constantius II was Caesar (A.D. 324–37). Ammianus indicates that Constantius built the city (*Antoninupolim oppidum . . . struxit*) when he fortified Amida.<sup>38</sup> Malalas notes that Constantius rebuilt (ἀνέγειρεν) the walls of the city and gave it his name.<sup>39</sup> Constantia increased in importance between the surrender of Nisibis in A.D. 363 and the construction of Dara in A.D. 505, because it became the most advanced Roman fortress (with Rhesaina) between Amida to the north and the Euphrates to the south. The *Notitia Dignitatum* lists the garrison as *legio I Parthica, equites felices Honoriani Illyriciani*, and *equites promoti indigenae*.<sup>40</sup> The city and the *dux* stationed there (until his displacement to Dara in A.D. 505) figure prominently in accounts of wars in Anastasius' reign.<sup>41</sup>

As I mentioned already, Malalas ascribes a reconstruction of the walls to Constantius II as Caesar. Procopius, in his *Buildings*, claims that until the reign of Justinian the walls were too low and falling down, with towers too widely spaced.<sup>42</sup> He states that Justinian completely rebuilt the fortifications, although these claims may be exaggerated.<sup>43</sup> The state of these fortifications in the last century was described by J.G. Taylor, who records them as constructed of basalt blocks, a square half a mile on each side (hence an area of ca. eighty hectares), with round towers at regular intervals.<sup>44</sup>

37. See Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, 221–22.

38. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.9.1.

39. Malalas 345.

40. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 36.29, 22, 24.

41. Procopius (*Wars* 2.13.11–15) claims that it was unimportant, with no garrison, when it was attacked by Cabades in A.D. 503. In his account, the city was defended by the citizens and saved from the Persians by the intervention of a priest. Joshua the Stylite (*Chronicle* [ed. Wright], 58) claims that a plot to surrender the city was foiled. The “*dux* of Tella” appears in Joshua’s account of the war (*Chronicle* [ed. Wright], 51).

42. Procopius *Buildings* 2.5.1–11.

43. See B. Croke and J.G. Crow, “Procopius and Dara,” *JRS* 73 (1983): 146.

44. Taylor, “Journal of a Tour in Armenia, Kurdistan, and Upper Mesopotamia,” 354. There is also a brief discussion of the site by M. Mango in Bell, *Churches and Monasteries of the Tur ‘Abdin*, 154–77.

## Edessa and Carrhae

Another city in Osroene that played an important part in the wars of the third to sixth centuries was Edessa. While technically not a fortress city, it was a military base on several occasions over four centuries, and the Syriac account (attributed to Joshua the Stylite) of the city in the wars in the reign of Anastasius in the early sixth century provides much evidence for the interaction of soldiers and civilians in cities at that time. This is discussed in greater detail in chapter 3. Likewise Carrhae functioned as a fortress city from the Severan period onward, and according to Malalas, it was re-founded as such with civic status by the emperor Carus, a development typical of many of the other fortress cities discussed in this appendix.<sup>45</sup>

## The Middle Euphrates

## Circesium

Circesium (modern Buseire) seems to have been another minor settlement turned into a fortress city by an imperial decision. According to Ammianus it was a small and insecure (*exiguum antehoc et suspectum*) settlement until Diocletian provided it with walls and towers.<sup>46</sup> He notes the natural strength of its position between two rivers and the strength of the fortress (*munimentum*) when Julian paused there with his army while advancing into Sassanian territory in A.D. 363. The garrison of Circesium recorded in the *Notitia Dignitatum* is *legio IV Parthica*.<sup>47</sup> This may have been the original Diocletianic garrison, as it does not appear in Ammianus' accounts of fourth-century wars in northern Mesopotamia, unlike most legions whose locations in the *Notitia* reflect redeployment after Jovian's settlement in A.D. 363. Procopius describes how Justinian rebuilt Circesium.<sup>48</sup>

It seems that Circesium gained civic status at or after Diocletian's fortification. Ammianus and Procopius refer to it in military terms—the

45. Malalas 303. For descriptions of the remains of late antique Edessa/Urfa and Carrhae/Harran, see Segal, *Edessa the Blessed City*; Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey*, 3:1–43.

46. Ammianus Marcellinus 23.5.1–2. The earlier settlement on the site is probably to be identified with the πόλις of Phaliga, which had a Parthian garrison in the first century A.D. See chap. 1; Isaac, *Limits* 165 n. 17; Oppenheimer, *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period*, 378–82; Isidore of Charax, *Parthian Stations* 1.

47. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 35.24.

48. Procopius *Buildings* 2.6.1–11.

former as a *munimentum*, the latter as a φρούριον—but it was an ecclesiastical see at the time of the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451. Jones suggests that civic status was acquired along with Justinian's reconstruction, and Circesium appears in the *Descriptio Orbis Romani* of George of Cyprus, generally assumed to be later sixth century, at least in final form.<sup>49</sup> There seems to have been a civilian population at the time of Justinian's reconstruction, as Procopius notes that Justinian rebuilt the bath that was used in common (δημοσίᾳ) by all the inhabitants (ῥηκνήμενοι), the latter a term that implies more than just soldiers.<sup>50</sup>

The archaeological remains are described by Herzfeld.<sup>51</sup> The site (which covers some twenty hectares, although its limits are difficult to determine) lies on a strip of land with the Khabur to the east, Euphrates marshes to the south and southwest, and an ancient cemetery to the west. Herzfeld noted remains of a city wall on the southeast and southwest sides of the tell and a high tower at its southernmost point. These remains are not described in great detail and may be Roman or Arab, as there was Byzantine and Arab pottery on the site. However, they give some indication of the extent of the Roman fortifications. Herzfeld describes in more detail a rectangular fort on the southwest face of the tell, which he dated to the Byzantine period on the basis of plan and construction techniques.

### Zenobia (fig. 17)

The next fortress city in the valley of the Euphrates east from Circesium is Zenobia (modern Halabiyya), on the south bank of the river. According to Procopius it was founded as a πόλις by Zenobia of Palmyra, although this story may be apocryphal. Subsequently, he claims, the city wall fell down and the inhabitants deserted the site, enabling Persians to infiltrate into Syria along the Euphrates valley.<sup>52</sup> A drastic decline in the city before the fourth century, if it then existed at all, seems plausible, since Ammianus does not mention it, and since it does not appear as a military base in the *Notitia Dignitatum*.<sup>53</sup>

49. George of Cyprus, *Descriptio Orbis Romani* line 907.

50. Procopius *Buildings* 2.6.10.

51. Sarre and Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise*, 1:172–74, figs. 78–79.

52. Procopius *Buildings* 2.8.8–10; *Wars* 2.5.4–7.

53. The mostly Byzantine remains are described in J. Lauffray, *Halabiyya-Zenobia: Place forte au limes oriental de la haute-Mésopotamie au VIe siècle* (2 vols. 1983–91), with vol. 1 focusing on the fortifications and city, while vol. 2 includes more information on the extramural settlement.

## Callinicum

The late Roman fortress city of Callinicum stood on the site of Hellenistic Nicephorium, said by ancient authors to have been founded either by Alexander the Great or by Seleucus Nicator.<sup>54</sup> There is little evidence for the subsequent history of the site, and Jones suggests that it may have disappeared entirely by the end of the third century A.D.<sup>55</sup>

Callinicum was the next obstacle after Zenobia for an attacker advancing along the Euphrates valley into the Roman empire. Like Circesium, it was on the north bank of the Euphrates, in Osrhoene (Zenobia was on the south bank and thus in Syria). Ammianus records that Julian's army spent a night at Callinicum before advancing into the Persian empire in A.D. 363,<sup>56</sup> describing it as a strong fortress and trading center (*munimentum robustum et commercandi optimitate gratissimum*). It is mentioned by Libanius as a σταθμός, a post or station, rather than a city.<sup>57</sup> The *Notitia Dignitatum* records a garrison, namely, the *equites promoti Illyriciani*,<sup>58</sup> but the general absence of evidence about the site suggests it was primarily a military post. Callinicum seems to have gained civic status in the reign of Leo (A.D. 457–74) as Leontopolis.<sup>59</sup> It figures prominently in Joshua the Stylite's account of Anastasius' conflict with Persia, as the seat of the “*dux* of Callinicum” (Wright's transliteration of the Syriac, probably the *dux* of Osrhoene) and as a place of importance in its own right. It was captured by Cabades in A.D. 503/4.<sup>60</sup> Procopius records that the Persians camped opposite the πόλις of Callinicum in A.D. 531 and that Chosroes I captured the city in A.D. 542, because the Romans had been rebuilding the walls and had pulled old sections down, leaving breaches that weakened the defenses.<sup>61</sup> The Romans left the city ungarrisoned, and the wealthiest citizens fled, leaving the rest of the population to be enslaved, including farmers who had come in from the countryside.

54. See Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, 215, 221–22. Isidore of Charax, *Parthian Stations* 1 and Pliny NH 6.119 attribute the city to Alexander, Appian *Bell. Syr.* 57 to Seleucus. Jones prefers the latter, pointing out that Alexander never won a victory near the city and hence probably would not have given it a title implying that he did.

55. Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, 221.

56. Ammianus Marcellinus 23.3.7.

57. Libanius *Ep.* 21.

58. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 35.16.

59. *Chron. Edessa* 70.

60. On the *dux*, see Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* (ed. Wright), 57, 69; on the capture by Cabades, 64.

61. Procopius *Wars* 1.18.13 (A.D. 531), 2.21.30–33 (A.D. 542).

The site of Roman and Byzantine Callinicum stands just east of the huge semicircular mud-brick wall circuit of Abbasid Raqqa. The Roman-Byzantine city lies in an area with extensive evidence of Arab occupation, including a mosque.<sup>62</sup> Recent investigation has yielded evidence of part of the Byzantine city wall, which may have enclosed an area of up to fifty hectares,<sup>63</sup> but the detailed topography of the city remains unclear.

### The Syrian Provinces

#### Sura

Sura was the most easterly strong point along the Euphrates within the Syrian provinces and variously was part of Syria, Syria Coele, and Euphratensis. It is not certain it was ever a city in status, although remains of the site show civilian settlement coexisting with the military site.<sup>64</sup> The first historical reference is that of Pliny the Elder, who records it as the place where the Euphrates turns east.<sup>65</sup> It was important as the junction of the Euphrates valley and a desert road from Palmyra. Pliny does not mention a settlement or Roman garrison there, but the Palmyra-Sura road was constructed in A.D. 75 by M. Ulpius Traianus, and Kennedy suggests that Sura was garrisoned as early as the Flavian period. He also suggests that the later garrison was *legio XVI Flavia Firma* (formerly at Samosata) as early as the Severan period.<sup>66</sup> Sura was important as the eastern limit of Roman power before the advance to the middle Euphrates and after the loss of that area. The Peutinger Table of the late third century refers to it as *finis exercitus Syriatic(a)e* [the limit of the Syrian army]. The garrison of Sura mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum* is *legio XVI Flavia Firma*.<sup>67</sup> Ammianus does not mention Sura, but Procopius records that the Roman army passed a night there in A.D. 531 and that Sura fell to Chosroes I in

62. See G. Bell, *Amurath to Amurath* (1924), 54–60.

63. M. al-Khalaf and K. Kohlmeyer “Untersuchungen zu ar-Raqqa-Nikephorion/Callinicum,” *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 2 (1985): 134–62.

64. It is not recorded as a city by George of Cyprus, for example. Procopius uses the term πόλις of Sura on two occasions in the *Wars* (1.18.14, 2.5.8–27), but in the *Buildings* he uses the terms τὸ Σούρων πόλισμα (2.9.1; meaning sometimes a city, sometimes something distinct from a city) and πολίχνιον (2.9.2; a diminutive, meaning “small town”), which probably implies a lack of civic status.

65. Pliny *NH* 5.87.

66. Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*, 116.

67. *Notitia Dignitatum*, *Or.* 32.28.

A.D. 540 as the result of a trick, after a failed assault.<sup>68</sup> In *Buildings*, he states that the defenses of Sura were weak and that Justinian walled the settlement, apparently after Chosroes captured it.<sup>69</sup>

The ancient site (modern Souriya) stands on the south bank of the Euphrates.<sup>70</sup> It consists of a very roughly rectangular area enclosure of about forty hectares with a wall, double ditch, and square towers. This appears to have been divided in two at some time, and the western half is fortified independently of the eastern. In the center of the enclosure is a small square fort. The total area of the enclosure is too great for just the garrison, and many of the buildings within the circuit, as well as some visible outside the walls, must have belonged to a civilian settlement.<sup>71</sup> While Sura may never have been a city, it was an episcopal see in the sixth century A.D.<sup>72</sup> Poidebard suggests that the remains are Justinianic, while Kennedy and Riley suggest that the small fort and the more heavily fortified western half of the enclosure housed the Justinianic garrison and the civilian population of that period, respectively. At any rate, Sura provides another example of an urban community developing around a military center, albeit perhaps one without the enhanced civic status of many fortress cities.

#### Resafa-Sergiopolis (fig. 18)

The first recognizable reference to Resafa is in Ptolemy's *Geography*, which describes the site, southwest of Sura on the Palmyra-Sura desert route, as a πόλις of Palmyra, although it is unlikely that it was as substantial as a Greco-Roman city.<sup>73</sup> As I noted earlier, the Romans showed interest in this route as early as the Flavian period, and Resafa perhaps acquired a garrison at an early date. However, the first clear reference to Roman military occupation comes in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, which records the garrison as *equites promoti indigenae*, perhaps a later equivalent of the Palmyrene cavalry in Roman service in earlier centuries.<sup>74</sup>

68. Procopius *Wars* 1.18.14, 2.5.8–27.

69. Procopius *Buildings* 2.9.1–2.

70. See Poidebard, *La Trace de Rome*, 83–90, pls. lxxix and lxxx; Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*, 115–16.

71. See Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*, 116.

72. See Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, 460 n. 54.

73. Ptolemy *Geography* 5.14.19.

74. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 33.27.

Resafa was the location of an important church dedicated to St. Sergius, and Procopius' account of the development of the city gives priority to its significance as a religious center.<sup>75</sup> He states that οἱ πάλαι [men of old] surrounded the church with a weak wall to keep out Saracen raiders. He records Justinian's benefactions to the community, noting that he built a better wall and added a garrison, improved the water supply, and added houses and stoas as "the embellishments of a city."<sup>76</sup> Perhaps at this time Resafa acquired the name *Sergiopolis*, by which it was known to George of Cyprus (*Descriptio Orbis Romani* line 883). He cites *Anastasiopolis* as an earlier name, so it had certainly acquired city status by the reign of Anastasius. The garrison probably was important in the growth of the city and its acquisition of civic status, although its importance as a cult center was another unusual feature contributing to its development.

Several studies of Resafa have been published.<sup>77</sup> The walled circuit encloses an area of about twenty hectares and there are further remains outside the wall, especially to the south. Within the circuit are extensive building remains, including those of the large church of St. Sergius. The walls and many of the visible internal remains, such as the large cisterns, may belong to Justinian's rebuilding. Karnapp acknowledges the limitations of dating based on architectural style but dates the defenses to the reign of Justinian, partly on the basis of sculptural decor of the north gate.<sup>78</sup> This is plausible but less convincing than a date based on stratigraphy as at Dibsi Faraj. Further archaeological work within and outside the wall circuit is in progress, and its publication may provide a clearer picture of the development of the city.

#### Dibsi Faraj–Neocaesarea (figs. 12 and 13)

The site of Dibsi Faraj–Neocaesarea is discussed in detail in chapter 2.

75. Procopius *Buildings* 2.9.3–4.

76. Procopius *Buildings* 2.9.6–8.

77. These include Poidebard, *La Trace de Rome*, 82, pls. lxxv and lxxvi; Kennedy and Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier*, 116–17; Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 2:174–80; Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer von Resafa in Syrien*. A German team has done survey work around Resafa and has published the excavation of a largely sixth century A.D. settlement about half a kilometer southwest of the city walls, in M. Mackensen, *Resafa*, vol. 1, *Eine befestigte spätantike Anlage vor den Stadtmauern von Resafa* (1984). Current plans showing the extent of excavated structures within the wall omit the very numerous mounds that are visible inside the wall circuit, suggesting dense occupation.

78. Karnapp, *Die Stadtmauer von Resafa*, 52–53.

## Palmyra (figs. 5 and 19)

After Aurelian's capture of Palmyra, the city virtually disappears from historical literature. Exceptions are the *Notitia Dignitatum* and Procopius' *Buildings*, which refer to it primarily as a military base. The former records the garrison as *legio I Illyricorum*, and it is possible that it was installed shortly after Aurelian's capture of the city.<sup>79</sup>

Most of the evidence for the late Roman city as military base is archaeological and epigraphic. Discussion centers around the chronology of the city walls<sup>80</sup> and the nature of the "Camp of Diocletian" in the western part of the city.<sup>81</sup> On a lintel in the "Camp of Diocletian" is an inscription recording that Diocletian, with a colleague described as imperator (the name is erased, probably Maximian), and the two Caesars Constantius and Maximian (Galerius) built a camp (*castra . . . condiderunt*) when Sossianus Hierocles was *praeses*, probably shortly before A.D. 303.<sup>82</sup> The *castra* might be the discrete area of the city called the "Camp of Diocletian" by modern scholars or the whole area (some eighty hectares) contained within the late city wall. This encloses only part of the city within earlier, less substantial walls, and the late city wall is generally ascribed to the tetrarchy on topographic and architectural grounds.<sup>83</sup> If the inscription refers to this wall, then the *castra* was the whole late Roman city within the circuit. Alternatively the inscription refers only to the "Camp of Diocletian," a group of buildings with a total area of ca. four hectares, in an angle of the late city wall to the west. This is separated from the rest of the city by a minor wall and comprises colonnaded cross streets with a tetrapylon at their junction,

79. *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 32.30; Procopius *Buildings* 2.11.10–12.

80. E.g., see D. van Berchem, "Recherches sur la chronologie des enceintes de Syrie et de Mésopotamie," *Syria* 31 (1954): 254–70.

81. The excavation report is in Gawlikowski, *Palmyre*. Other discussions referred to here are D. Schlumberger's "Le Pretendu Camp de Dioclétien à Palmyre," *MUSJ* 38 (1962): 79–97; and R. Fellman's "Le Camp de Dioclétien à Palmyre et l'architecture militaire du Bas-Empire," in *Mélanges d'histoire ancienne et d'archéologie offerts à Paul Collart*, Cahiers d'Archéologie Romande, no. 5 (1976), 173–91. There is a useful discussion in English in Gregory, *Roman Military Architecture*, 2:189–95. M. Baranski's "The Roman Army in Palmyra: A Case of Adaptation of a Pre-existing City," in *The Roman and Byzantine Army in the East*, ed. E. Dabrowa (1994), 9–17, is a brief recent study of the army in Palmyra.

82. *CIL* III, 133 and 6661. He also appears in a bath inscription, *SEG* 7,152. On Sossianus Hierocles and the date of his governorship of Syria, see T.D. Barnes, "Sossianus Hierocles and the Antecedents of the 'Great Persecution,'" *HSCP* 80 (1976): 239–52.

83. See van Berchem, "Recherches sur la chronologie des enceintes," 256–62; M. Gawlikowski, "Les Defences de Palmyre," *Syria* 51 (1974): 231–42.

the central axis leading to an open court with a structure like military *principia* behind it. Behind that is an apsidal structure interpreted as the chapel for the legionary standards. The whole area is almost certainly part of a military camp.<sup>84</sup> Some of the rows of small rooms may be barracks. Undoubtedly either this discrete “camp” area or the whole late Roman city was the base of *legio I Illyricorum* cited in the *Notitia Dignitatum*.

With regard to the civilian aspect of the fortress city, many scholars suggest that Aurelian’s sack of Palmyra practically put an end to civic life. The city then largely disappears from the historical record, and there are few inscriptions from the later period. Isaac claims that the Roman garrison of late imperial Palmyra was “not really comparable with that of military units based in cities” and that it was deployed there to secure routes near the city rather than the city itself.<sup>85</sup> Certainly fourth-century Palmyra was not comparable to the city before Aurelian’s sack, and its importance may have been due to the junction of roads. However, it was still a πόλις at the time of Procopius and of George of Cyprus, and an inscribed milestone shows that it had the title of *colonia* during the reign of Diocletian.<sup>86</sup> The lack of inscriptions after the mid-third century is quite normal for eastern cities and does not imply the end of civic life. Procopius’ reference to the city as almost deserted may not be relevant to the whole of the city’s history since A.D. 274 and may have been exaggeration even at the time it was written.<sup>87</sup> According to Millar, Palmyra continued as a “minor Greek provincial place,”<sup>88</sup> not unlike other late Roman fortress cities in character.

In fact, the situation of the army in tetrarchic Palmyra may have been similar to Dura-Europos about a century earlier. The “Camp of Diocletian” was smaller and more monumental than the camp at Dura, and it is unlikely that all the soldiers of even a small legion of the late empire could have been contained within it. Probably the headquarters and some barracks were located there. The camp wall at Palmyra clearly was

84. Schlumberger (“Le Pretéendu Camp de Dioclétien”) is the only scholar to have doubted this interpretation. He suggests that the structure was a palace, claiming that the similarity to military architecture is minimal and coincidental. Fellman (“Le Camp de Dioclétien”) has refuted Schlumberger’s arguments, showing that late imperial military architecture provides closer comparanda than the earlier sites discussed by Schlumberger.

85. Isaac, *Limits*, 165.

86. See Poidebard, *La Trace de Rome*, 200 n. 1.

87. Procopius *Buildings* 2.11.10–12.

88. Millar, “The Roman *Coloniae*,” 45.

symbolic rather than functional,<sup>89</sup> and it probably was permeable like its counterpart at Dura-Europos, allowing soldiers, their dependents, and a modest population of other civilians to mingle in the main part of the city, beyond the camp area proper. Hence the term *castra* may have been applied to the city as a whole (just as Procopius sometimes used  $\phi\rho\omicron\upsilon\text{-}\kappa\iota\omicron\nu$  for a whole fortress city) rather than to just the small camp area as defined by modern scholars.

### Antioch and the *Comitatus*

As I mentioned in the Introduction, the two main components of the late Roman army depicted in the *Notitia Dignitatum* were *limitanei* (the provincial defense forces) and the *comitatus*. The locations of units of *limitanei* are listed in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, but the entry for the *comitatus* of the *magister militum per orientem* (based permanently in the eastern provinces) merely lists the units' names.

This raises the question of where such a large force was based. Undoubtedly, in wartime or if war seemed imminent, some units were deployed in frontier areas, particularly cities of northern Mesopotamia. In his account of the garrison of Amida during the Persian siege of A.D. 359, Ammianus notes that the usual garrison was one legion and some cavalry.<sup>90</sup> However, for the siege, it had swollen to six legions, including units originally from the western provinces, perhaps part of the imperial *comitatus* (the Magnentian and Decentian units and probably the *legio* XXX), and a unit called *comites*. Similarly, units mentioned by Ammianus in the garrisons of Bezabde and Singara are listed in the *comitatus* of the *magister militum per orientem* in the *Notitia Dignitatum*.<sup>91</sup> Sometimes the *magister militum* would be in the frontier cities too. Ursicinus, who held this office in A.D. 354, had to be recalled from Nisibis to Antioch to preside over the trials of individuals supposedly plotting against Gallus.<sup>92</sup> Clearly, some fortress cities had their permanent garrisons increased substantially in time of conflict. Indeed, the fortifications of many fortress cities may have been intended as "facilities in which the

89. See Fellman, "Le Camp de Dioclétien," 64.

90. Ammianus Marcellinus 18.9.3–4.

91. Ibid., 20.6.8 (Singara: *I Flavia*), 20.7.1, (Bezabde: *II Flavia*, *II Armeniaca*); *Notitia Dignitatum* Or. 7.24–58.

92. See Ammianus Marcellinus, 14.9.1–3.

field army could take up a defensive posture when necessary”<sup>93</sup> or within which their citizens could defend themselves, rather than primarily as facilities for their permanent garrisons, many of which were cavalry units, better suited to scouting than defending city walls. However, it is clear from Libanius that the *magister militum per orientem* spent much time at Antioch in the fourth century, and the possibility that *comitatenses* might have at times been based in and around Antioch makes it appropriate at this point to consider Antioch as a military base in the later empire.

As in the earlier empire, discussed in appendix A, the military importance of Antioch lay in a role not as a permanent garrison town but as a transit, assembly, and training place for soldiers on campaign further east and an imperial and regional capital for officials, whose presence also entailed that of military personnel.

It is clear that the presence of troops at Antioch was irregular, and there were several famous occasions on which soldiers were absent. When five hundred soldiers engaged in harbor construction at Seleucia Pieria revolted and marched on Antioch during the reign of Diocletian, there was no garrison to defend the city, but the rebels were defeated by the citizens.<sup>94</sup> During the “Riot of the Statues” in Antioch in A.D. 387, the Antiochene mob ran wild and threatened to kill the civil governor of the province, the *consularis Syriae*. Only after the arrival of regular troops under the *comes orientis* to supplement the “archers” (apparently a civic police force) was the revolt suppressed.<sup>95</sup> Regular soldiers arrived after some delay and perhaps came from a camp outside the city proper.<sup>96</sup> A garrison seems to have been installed shortly after this incident. Certainly one was present in the early A.D. 390s.<sup>97</sup> However, during the Persian attack in A.D. 540, there were initially no soldiers to defend the city, and its defense was undertaken partly by the citizens, particularly by circus factions.<sup>98</sup>

Despite this negative evidence, it is clear that the presence of troops in

93. Harper, “Excavations at Dibsi Faraj,” 324.

94. See Libanius *Or.* 20.18–20.

95. See Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, 124f.

96. See Libanius *Or.* 19.34–36.

97. See *ibid.*, 46.13–14, on the ἐγκαθήμενος λόχος.

98. See Procopius, *Wars* 2.8.2, 17. The role of the circus factions is discussed in Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium* (1976), 105–25. Cameron disputes the view that the factions formed a regular civic militia.

and around the city was an important feature of late Roman Antioch. For much of the period, the city was an imperial capital, with an Augustus or a Caesar in residence.<sup>99</sup> Diocletian, Constantius, Gallus, Julian, Jovian, and Valens all spent considerable amounts of time there, and their personal bodyguards contributed to the military population.<sup>100</sup> Other officials based in Antioch had military retinues. They included the *magister militum per orientem* attested there in the fourth century by Ammianus and Libanius (as the στρατηγός). He probably was there in the sixth century too. In the Syriac *Life of Simeon the Stylite*, the author records that military commanders and soldiers went to the place of the saint's death (in A.D. 459) outside Antioch to escort his body. From A.D. 334, the *comes orientis* (called the ἄρχων by Libanius) was another official in Antioch who commanded troops, as demonstrated by Libanius' account of the "Riot of the Statues" in A.D. 387. There were also military workshops (*fabricae*) for arms and armor in the city in the fourth century.<sup>101</sup>

As in earlier centuries, Antioch was an important mustering place for campaigns against Persia. Both Constantius and Julian spent time there preparing to campaign further east,<sup>102</sup> and at this time the author of the *Expositio Totius Mundi* referred to the city as a military base. It is also possible that the *magister militum per orientem* raised, trained, and wintered elements of his *comitatus* in the vicinity of Antioch on a regular basis. Antioch and Seleucia Pieria also retained their roles as logistical centers for the support of wars in the east. The original function of the *comes orientis*, based at Antioch, probably was to organize logistics for such campaigns.<sup>103</sup> The employment of soldiers at Seleucia Pieria in the reign of Diocletian suggests a continued military function for the port, and this is clear from references to the completion of harbor construction in the reign of Constantius.<sup>104</sup>

The probability of a large military presence in and around Antioch raises the question of where these troops lived. Certainly some lived in the city itself on occasion. This is made clear by Ammianus' account of

99. See Downey, *History of Antioch*, 317–413 passim; Isaac, *Limits*, 436–38, app. ii.

100. See Ammianus Marcellinus 14.7.12 (for Gallus' bodyguard); Zosimus 3.3.4 (for Jovian's bodyguard).

101. For the *magister militum* and the *comes orientis*, see chap. 3. For Simeon the Stylite, see *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum* vol. 4, ed. P. Bedjan (1894), 640. For military workshops, see *Notitia Dignitatum* Or. 11.21–22.

102. For Julian, see, e.g., Ammianus Marcellinus 22.12.1–3.

103. See Downey, *History of Antioch*, 354–55.

104. See Theophanes, a. 5838 (ed. de Boor, pp. 386–87); Julian Or. 1.40D.

Julian's stay, in references to members of the *Celtae* and *Petulantes* living in *diversoria* (lodgings) in the city.<sup>105</sup> Libanius refers to a training ground near the city<sup>106</sup> and also to soldiers billeted in the villages in the countryside nearby.<sup>107</sup>

Just as in its earlier history, Antioch was a center for a large but shifting population of military personnel in the later empire, even though it does not seem to have had a permanent garrison for much of its history. It was not a fortress city like those of northern Mesopotamia or the Euphrates valley, but it played an important role in support of wars further east. The speeches of Libanius provide good evidence for the impact of this military population on the life of the city in the fourth century.

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105. Ammianus Marcellinus 22.12.6.

106. Libanius *Or.* 15.76, 20.47.

107. *Ibid.*, 47 *passim*.



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